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The Significance of the Ch'ing Period in Chinese History

PING-TI HO

ALTHOUGH the Ch'ing period is generally regarded as one of the better studied and understood periods of Chinese history, the existing fund of our knowledge is actually far from adequate. A systematic discussion of the significance of the entire period from 1644 to 1912 would require a large number of articles, monographs, and fresh syntheses. Since the purpose of this paper is merely to stimulate further discussion and research, I hope to be excused for making a few highly tentative generalizations.

The general significance of the Ch'ing period is that chronologically it falls between what is traditional and what is modern. However much the new China changes in the future, the Ch'ing period, the last phase of China's *ancien régime*, has left important legacies. The Ch'ing period will continue to serve as a datum plane from which to study either the earlier periods or to analyze the heritage of present-day China. To understand more fully both earlier and contemporary China, therefore, the Ch'ing period is crucial.

The Ch'ing period is significant for a number of more specific reasons. First, geographically China could never have reached its present dimensions without the laborious, painstaking, and skillful work of empire building carried out by Manchu rulers between 1600 and 1800. Since much of present-day China's impact on the outside world is due to its size and the location of its frontiers, the contribution of the Ch'ing period to the formation of modern China as a geographic and ethnic entity is of the greatest significance. Simple statistics will tell part of the story. The area known as China proper, which throughout much of the imperial age represented the limits of effective Chinese jurisdiction, amounts roughly to 1,532,800 square miles, which is about one-half the area of the United States. By late Ch'ing, when the Manchu empire had shrunk considerably from its fullest extent (reached by the end of the eighteenth century), China still embraced an area of approximately 4,278,000 square miles, which is 606,000 square miles larger than the area of the People's Republic of China.

It is true that at the peak of the Han and T'ang dynasties the Chinese empire reached as far west as parts of present-day Russian Turkestan, and that the Mongol empire is the largest in the annals of man. But the westward expansion of Han and T'ang was ephemeral at best, and the Mongol world empire was too loosely organized to leave any permanent imprint. In contrast, the Manchus alone were able to work out long-range policies of control and to design complex administrative and military apparatus by which to make the largest consolidated empire in Chinese history endure.

With the exception of the Mongol Yuan empire and such earlier non-Chinese em-

pires as the To-ba Wei, the best that any Chinese dynasty could hope for was to make the Great Wall an effective front line of defense against the northern nomads. Thanks to their geographic propinquity to the Mongols and especially to their far-sightedness, the early Manchu rulers had worked out, even before 1644, a basic long-range policy towards the Mongols of Inner Mongolia, which was continued and amplified down to the very end of the dynasty. The policy consisted of perennial inter-marriage between the imperial clan and Mongol princedoms; periodic conferring of noble ranks on various strata of the Mongol ruling class; the endorsement by the imperial government of Lamaism as the religion for the Mongols; the setting-up of administrative machinery from *aimaks* (principalities), *chigolgans*, (leagues), down to *hoshigo* (banners), which not only suited Mongol customs but also allowed the Manchus to follow a policy of divide and rule. All these, and much else, were supervised from Peking by *Li-fan-yüan*, or the Court of Colonial Affairs. In addition, a significant number of Mongols were incorporated into the Eight Banner system and into the central and provincial administration. Although early Ch'ing statutes prohibited the Chinese from entering the domains reserved for Mongol nomads, the imperial government from the late seventeenth century onwards connived at Chinese migrations to Inner Mongolia, especially in times of famine. Chinese immigration also received the tacit blessing of Mongol nobles who found their new role as *rentiers* profitable. Wherever sizable Chinese agricultural colonies were established, the imperial government set up regular local administrations, that is, counties and prefectures. Since by late Ch'ing times Chinese migrations to the northern steppe had become large-scale, Inner Mongolia had become increasingly sinicized. The integration with the rest of China of the Inner Mongolian steppe, which prior to the advent of the Manchus had always been outside the pale of Chinese civilization, was exclusively a Ch'ing contribution. Similar Chinese migrations to Manchuria, especially from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards, have made Manchuria thoroughly Chinese, despite the onslaughts of Czarist Russia and Japan.

The need in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries to defend Khalkha (Outer Mongolia) from the warlike Dzungars of Northern Chinese Turkestan led the Manchus to a long series of wars which resulted in the establishment of Chinese suzerainty over Outer Mongolia and Tibet and the conquest of Kokonor and Chinese Turkestan. The effectiveness of Manchu control of these far-flung regions varied inversely in proportion to the magnitude of such difficulties as distance, terrain, transportation of men and supplies and financial resources. That the complex Ch'ing system of control of these outlying areas was by and large ingenious and viable may be evidenced by the well-known facts; namely, that Chinese Turkestan and Kokonor were made into new provinces of Sinkiang and Chinghai respectively in 1884 and 1928, that the imperial resident and garrisons in Lhasa were not withdrawn until after the fall of the dynasty in 1912, and that Outer Mongolia did not legally secede from China until January, 1946.

After 1842, the Ch'ing empire was compelled to learn the harsh realities of modern power politics. Step by step, Russia, Britain, France, and Japan reduced the question of the legal status of China's outlying regions and dependent states to an almost purely academic one. Every party had learned from *Realpolitik* that the true status of any of China's peripheral areas depended on China's ability to exert effective control. It is this rude historical lesson that prompted the People's Republic of

China to seize the earliest possible opportunities to rush its army into Sinkiang and Tibet.

Before summing up the Ch'ing territorial bequest, it should be pointed out that the extension of China's internal frontiers in Ch'ing times, if less spectacular than empire-building, is historically equally important. Although the history of the extension of China's internal frontiers is almost as old as Chinese history itself, it was from the Yung-cheng period (1723-1735) onwards that a more energetic policy of sinicization was directed against the various non-Han ethnic groups who constituted the majority in the hilly enclaves of Hunan, the highlands of Western Hupei, and a number of mountainous districts of Yunnan, Kweichow, Szechwan, and Kwangsi. The core of this policy was to replace the native tribal system with ordinary Chinese local administration. Between 1723 and 1912 this policy was applied also to parts of Kansu, Kokonor, Chinese Turkestan, and eastern Tibet, which was made into Sikang province between 1928 and 1949. It is worth mentioning that even the last few years of the Manchu dynasty witnessed a recrudescence of this policy in Sikang. Without the extension and consolidation of the southwestern internal frontiers, it is doubtful that the southwest could have served so well as China's last territorial base of operation against Japan during the critical years from 1937 to 1945. Externally, as well as internally, therefore, the Ch'ing period is of greatest importance to the formation of modern China as a geographic entity.

A second important inheritance that modern China has received from the Ch'ing is her large population. Prior to the Ch'ing the peak officially registered population of China was 60,000,000, although there is reason to believe that during certain earlier periods, such as latter halves of Sung and Ming, the population may well have exceeded 100,000,000. The basic fact remains, however, that a preindustrial population could not as a rule grow at a sustained high rate unless the combined economic and institutional factors were unusually favorable. As has been discussed in my *Studies on the Population of China, 1368-1935*,¹ such a combination of favorable economic and institutional factors did exist in the century from the dawn of domestic peace and prosperity in 1683 to the late Ch'ien-lung era when China's population had shot up to 300,000,000. Even an increasingly unfavorable population-land ratio and deteriorating economic conditions could not prevent the population from reaching 430,000,000 by 1850 through sheer momentum. While modern China had unquestionably been plagued by overpopulation and mass poverty, her present estimated population of 700,000,000, when ruthlessly regimented by the most Spartan state in history, cannot fail to make its impact felt. To understand the historical roots of this impact of numbers, the Ch'ing period is again crucial.

Thirdly, the Ch'ing is without doubt the most successful dynasty of conquest in Chinese history, and the key to its success was the adoption by early Manchu rulers of a policy of systematic sinicization. The Ch'ing period thus provides an excellent case study for the complex processes of acculturation which in turn helps to sharpen our perception of the inherent strength of traditional Chinese institutions and culture. Space does not allow a systematic explanation of the reasons why early Manchu

¹ Cambridge, Mass., 1959.

rulers had to adopt such a policy. Suffice it to say here that for a conquering ethnic group so vastly outnumbered by the Chinese, the most effective long-range policy was to sponsor the very institutional and cultural system which the Chinese nation, especially the key social class of scholars and officials, regarded as orthodox. The systematic sinicization of the Hsiao-wen emperor of Northern Wei late in the fifth century and the conversion to Catholicism of Henry IV of France in 1598 were dictated by similar political necessities.

Systematic sinicization of the Manchu imperial clan, nobility, and officials may be evidenced by the following facts: the adoption from the beginning of the dynasty of the Ming government system *in toto*, which, with a few Manchu innovations, was improved and rationalized; the ardent endorsement by the K'ang-hsi emperor and his successors of the conservative and passive aspects of social and political relationships in later Sung Neo-Confucianism as official orthodoxy; the unprecedented homage that the Ch'ing emperors paid to Confucius (two kneelings and six prostrations in Peking and three kneelings and nine prostrations in Confucius' birthplace, Ch'ü-fu); the designing and maintaining of the strictest education for imperial princes in Chinese history based largely on orthodox Confucianism; the utilization of Confucian orthodoxy as a justification for abolishing the various layers of feudal relationships within the indigenous Manchu Eight Banner system; the large-scale printing and dissemination under imperial auspices of ancient classics and Neo-Confucian writings of the Ch'eng-Chu school and literary reference tools and anthologies which culminated in the compilation of the *Ssu-k'ü ch'üan-shu*; and the increasing addiction to Chinese literature, calligraphy, painting, and entertainments.

It is true that such unusually able rulers as K'ang-hsi, Yung-cheng, and Ch'ien-lung did not fail to realize the importance of preserving certain Manchu traits and customs. But so effective was the crucible of Chinese culture that by the latter half of the eighteenth century the imperially exhorted Manchu nativism had boiled down to little more than a legal obligation on the part of imperial princes and Manchu examination candidates to practice horsemanship and archery and to study the Manchu language, although Manchu Shamanism seems to have survived till the end of the dynasty. There is definite evidence that even for imperial princes, Manchu had become a dead language by the beginning of the nineteenth century at the latest. Furthermore, there is ample evidence that interethnic marriage went on throughout the Ch'ing period, especially during the long reign of K'ang-hsi and toward the end of the dynasty. The fact that Manchu Bannermen suffered progressive impoverishment as a result of their prolonged mingling with the Chinese in both urban and rural areas is too well known to need any elaboration.

In fact, so sinicized were the Manchus that much of what we regard as the orthodox Confucian state and society is exemplified not by earlier Chinese dynasties, but the Ch'ing period. We need mention only that in its formative stage the Sung Confucian state is known for its remarkable diversity of thought and policy and for its absence of officially endorsed orthodoxy. In spite of the Ming founder's choice of the Ch'eng-Chu school as orthodoxy, none of his successors showed any real concern for ideology. Even as gifted a Ming ruler as Hsüan-tsung (1425-1435) sent an official and his family to prison upon the latter's remonstrance that certain erudite officials should be appointed to help the emperor to study the Sung scholar Chen Te-hsiu's *Ta-hsüeh yen-i* (Systematic Exposition of the Book of Great Learning). In contrast,

from K'ang-hsi's majority to the end of Ch'ing the officials selected to serve as imperial tutors and as special lecturers on Confucian classics for the emperor in spring and autumn were all scholars of the Ch'eng-Chu school. For good or for evil, it was under the alien Manchu rule that China became a strictly conformist "orthodox" Confucian state. In no earlier period of Chinese history do we find a deeper permeation and wider acceptance of the norms, mores, and values which modern students regard as Confucian.

Despite its inevitable cost, the Manchu policy of systematic sinicization and Confucianization served dynastic interests extremely well. The Manchus ruled China for a period of 268 years, as compared to a mere 89 years of Mongol rule of all China. For all their shortcomings and repressive measures, the eras of K'ang-hsi, Yung-cheng and early Ch'ien-lung constituted one of the rare periods in Chinese history in which the majority of the nation enjoyed peace, prosperity, and contentment. When the supreme test came in 1851 with the outbreak of the Taiping rebellion, the majority of the Chinese nation, especially the key social class of scholars and officials, fought loyally for their Manchu masters because the so-called alien dynasty had been, in fact, more Confucian than previous Chinese dynasties.

Fourthly, despite the collapse of the old order by the end of the dynasty, the Ch'ing period on the whole must be regarded as one in which traditional political, economic, and social institutions attained greater maturity and the economy and society achieved a greater degree of interregional integration.

As to political institutions, the Ch'ing definitely benefited from the prolonged trial and error of such earlier periods as Sung and Ming. A comparison of the administrative law of various dynasties since the T'ang reveals that in matters such as jurisdictions of and the interrelations between various offices, the classification and transmission of documents, the procedures by which decisions were made and subsequently executed, and a wide range of regulations on appointment, discipline, etc., the Ch'ing system appears to have been more meticulous, regularized, and rational.

It is true that few if any social and economic institutions originated in Ch'ing times. As is well known, merchant and craft guilds can be traced back at least to the T'ang, the modern type of patrilineal clan to 1050, private academies and the system of community chests for examination candidates also to the Sung. Likewise, various nongovernment benevolent institutions ranging from orphanages and community cemeteries for the poor to fire-squads and life-saving boats had all originated in earlier periods. Whereas during earlier formative periods they may have been sporadic, inadequately supported, or of limited geographic distribution, by the Ch'ing period they reached fuller development and became more common.

An excellent example by which to illustrate the maturing of economic and social institutions and to indicate greater interregional economic and social integration is the multiplication in Ch'ing times of various types of voluntary associations based on common geographic origin, generally called *hui-kuan* (*Landmannschaften*). As far as can be ascertained from extant records, the *hui-kuan* made its debut in Peking in the early fourteen twenties in the form of an exclusive club for *Landmann* of Wuhu, Anhwei, who served as officials of the central government. From 1560 on, some regional merchant groups began to establish their *hui-kuan* in the nation's capital. By the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, *hui-kuan* established by merchants

and craftsmen of various geographic origins began to appear in major cities and a few prosperous towns of the lower Yangtze. During Ch'ing times, however, the city of Soochow, southern Kiangsu, boasted as many as 41 *hui-kuan* and many more guilds established by various *Landsmann* groups who came from virtually every part of China. In late Ch'ing there were nearly 400 *hui-kuan* in Peking alone which represented all the provinces and scores of prosperous prefectures and counties and which served mainly as hostels for *Landsmann* candidates for the metropolitan examinations. From my recent book, *Chung-kuo hui-kuan shih-lun (An Historical Survey of Landsmannschaften in China)*,² it is shown that by late Ch'ing times, *hui-kuan*, whether open to all social statuses or only to members of *Landsmann* guilds, existed in all provincial capitals, major and minor coastal and inland ports, certain sub-county towns, and many obscure inland counties noted neither for their trade nor crafts. The highest density is found in Szechwan, where practically every county had at least a few *hui-kuan* established by immigrants from afar and some counties had as many as 40 or 50.

In Szechwan and elsewhere in major cities where detailed local history or new inscriptional data are available, we learn that various *Landsmann* groups tended to merge into what in modern terms may be called chambers of commerce, and to take part in matters concerning the welfare of the entire local community. Constant contacts between various *Landsmann* groups and natives often resulted in intermarriage and brought about social assimilation. Contrary to the impressions of various Western and Japanese scholars that the prevalence of *hui-kuan* in Ch'ing times reflected an unusually strong local particularism in China and hence has retarded the modernization of Chinese economy and society, the existence of thousands of *hui-kuan* in all parts of China and the coexistence of various *Landsmann* groups in the same major and minor cities could not but have facilitated interregional economic and social integration—a process which went on apace even during the late Ch'ing and early Republican period of political disintegration.

Fifthly, in material culture and the arts, the Ch'ing period may be regarded as one of leisurely fulfillment and enrichment. One basic reason for the remarkable advancement in material culture which in turn stimulated broader cultural growth was the rare century of prosperity and benevolent despotism following the dawning of *Pax Sinica* in 1683. The field of Ch'ing material culture is obviously too vast to enable us to make any tentative generalization. For the present purpose, we can only surmise from better-quality local histories that the division of labor in trades and crafts became increasingly minute and that the range, variety and volume of articles for mass and elite consumption became even greater. While the merchant princes of the lower Yangtze set new standards of conspicuous consumption, a rising standard of living was nevertheless enjoyed by substantial segments of the population.

This century of peace and prosperity witnessed, among many things, an unprecedented demand for and supply of books and the rise of great bibliophiles and art connoisseurs. Led by the imperial court which since K'ang-hsi's majority had begun to compile, edit, and print books and to collect art on a grand scale, the merchant princes of the lower Yangtze and many officials and well-to-do scholars followed

² Taipei, 1966.

suit. While the vogue of cultivating scholarly and artistic avocations by the elite was a national phenomenon, the lower Yangtze area remained throughout this century the center of Chinese cultural activities. It was largely the wealth, leisure, great libraries and art collections, and the over-all sophistication of the lower Yangtze area that provided opportunities for the rise of research scholarship as an end in itself; for the flowering of the wonderful school of expressionistic painters led by Shih-t'ao and the Yang-Chou masters, who, along with the hermit Pa-ta-shan-jen, inspired such modern giants as Chao Chih-ch'ien (1829-1884), Jen I, better known as Jen Po-nien (1840-1895), Wu Ch'ang-shih (1844-1927), and Ch'i Po-shih (1862-1957); for the maturing of various schools of opera, including the one which was later somewhat erroneously called Peking opera.

After the decline of lower Yangtze merchant princes by about 1800, cultural activities became geographically more evenly spread and reached a wider public. In terms of the range of cultural activities and of their degree of permeation, there is little reason to agree with the erstwhile influential view that the Ch'ing period was one of cultural and artistic stagnation.

Lastly, an attempt shall be made to point out certain basic factors which appear to me of primary significance in accounting for the decline and fall of the maturest empire in Chinese history. To begin with, thanks to the existence of unusually favorable economic and institutional factors during the century of *Pax Sinica*, by the late eighteenth century the population explosion had reached unprecedented proportions and created a set of new economic problems with which China's existing fund of technological knowledge failed to cope. Second, for all its outward grandeur, the era of Ch'ien-lung was one of widening discrepancy between law and practice and of creeping peculation, which, judging from the three installments of confidential Grand Council archives published in *Wen-hsien ts'ung-pien*,³ may have become nation-wide and semi-institutionalized, at least between 1776 and 1799. It was the widespread peculation from the Ch'ien-lung era onwards that transformed the benevolent despotism of K'ang-hsi and Yung-cheng into a malevolent despotism that had so much to do with the outbreak of the White Lotus and subsequent rebellions. Third, the exigency of the Taiping wars forced the post-1850 Ch'ing government to resort to the sale of office on a scale seldom paralleled in Chinese history—a factor which was regarded by many a post-Taiping statesman and official as the taproot of all administrative evils. Fourth, during and after the Taiping rebellion there was a tendency toward increasing political decentralization caused by the growth of the powers of the provincial authorities and by the increasing inability of the provincial authorities to exert effective control over the local officials. Fifth, for the first time in her long history, China was brought into the maelstrom of modern world politics by the West, whose culture was in many ways her equal and in some crucial ways her superior. While prior to the Opium War the working of some of these factors had contributed to the weakening of the Manchu empire, it was the convergence and interplay of all these factors after 1840 that eventually brought about the downfall of the Ch'ing dynasty and the disintegration of traditional Chinese institutions and Confucian culture.

³ Peiping, 1935 (No. 25-26, April and May) and 1937 (No. 6, June).



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Presidential Address: Reenvisioning the Qing: The Significance of the Qing Period in Chinese History

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Presidential Address: Reenvisioning the Qing: The Significance of the Qing Period in Chinese History

EVELYN S. RAWSKI

THIRTY YEARS AGO, Association for Asian Studies President Ho Ping-ti summarized the state of Qing studies in his address, "The Significance of the Ch'ing Period in Chinese History" (Ho 1967). Since that time, there have been major shifts in scholarly perceptions of the nature and significance of Qing rule that bear directly on contemporary issues of nationalism and ethnicity. I will survey the recent secondary literature, compare current formulations of Qing history with those enunciated by Professor Ho, and appraise their implications for our understanding of China.

Although the Qing state conducted its official business in both Chinese and Manchu, many scholars ignored the documents written in Manchu, arguing that they merely duplicated materials found in the Chinese-language sources. This assumption was challenged by Beatrice Bartlett, whose investigation of the Grand Council's archival inventories led her to conclude that "many unique Manchu documents, never translated into Chinese, were produced in the middle and even the late Ch'ing" (Bartlett 1985, 26).

The new scholarship has demonstrated that Manchu-language documents were a vital part of an early Qing communications network that frequently bypassed Han Chinese officials. Until the Jiaqing reign (1796–1820), the court required banner officials, generals commanding armies in the north and west, and Manchu officials receiving edicts written in Manchu to write in Manchu to the throne. These Manchu-language palace memorials, court letters, and other central government documents are important primary sources that have not yet been fully exploited (Qu 1989; Wu Yuanfeng 1991; Crossley and Rawski 1993).

The recent scholarship has been stimulated by improved access to the archival materials in the Manchu language for the entire Qing dynasty, held in the Number One Historical Archives, Beijing, and the National Palace Museum, outside Taipei (Chen, Chieh-hsien 1988). The National Palace Museum's publication in 1977 of the Manchu-language palace memorials for the Kangxi reign (1661–1722) marked a significant advance in scholarly access (KCZZ). Although their counterparts for other

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reigns remain unpublished,¹ these materials in the Beijing and Taipei archives have been available to scholars since the 1980s. New analyses of the circumstances under which the materials were created have provided historians with the necessary context in which to place the documents (Guan 1988; Zhao Zhiqiang 1992; Qiao 1994). Catalogues of Manchu-language holdings around the world² include materials from the scattered Manchu-language archives of various banners. New Manchu-Chinese dictionaries (MHDC 1993), and recent Chinese translations of selected texts (see Crossley and Rawski 1993) have also eased the researcher's task.

Chinese-language sources for studying Qing history have also become more accessible in recent decades. The dynasty's Collected Regulations (DQHD) and the Veritable Records (DQSL) have been reprinted in both Taiwan and the PRC, as have many of the "diaries of rest and repose" which complement the Veritable Records (QDQZ; KXQZ; YZQZ). Chinese-language palace memorials compiled by the First Historical Archives in Beijing (KCHZ; YZHC; QLHZ) incorporate the archival materials held in Taiwan (GDZZ) and open new windows into the process of decision making at the highest levels. Archival materials concerning the palace workshops (*Yuanmingyuan* 1991) and the medical treatment accorded Empress Dowager Cixi and the Guangxu emperor (Chen Keji 1986) have been compiled and reproduced. Additional supports for Qing studies are the reprints of important printed sources concerning banner history (BQTZ; BQMST), contemporary memoirs such as Zhaolian's *Xiaoting zalu*, and palace history (GCGS; Zhang Naiyan 1990).

A number of organizations have also encouraged Manchu studies. There is a Manchu Association of Taipei, founded in 1981 (Crossley 1990a, 216), which brings together individuals of Manchu descent. In the PRC the Society for Manchu Studies (*Manzuxue yanjiu*) publishes a bimonthly journal (*Manzu yanjiu*). Japanese scholars in the Seminar on Manchu History, Toyo Bunko, have compiled important banner texts (Kanda et al. 1972, 1983), and the Manchu Historical Society (*Manshûshi kenkyûkai*) of Japan publishes a newsletter. Several European periodicals, notably *Zentralasiatische Studien* and *Central Asiatic Journal*, regularly feature articles on Manchu literature, religion, and history. American scholarship finds many outlets, including the journal *Late Imperial China*, first issued as a bulletin in 1967 by the Society for Ch'ing Studies under the title *Ch'ing-shih wen-t'i*. Articles on the Qing appear frequently in the periodical *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan*, published by the National Palace Museum, Beijing; *Lishi dang'an*, the historical archives journal; and *Forbidden City* (*Zijincheng*), a journal published from the 1980s through the early 1990s. Several presses, notably the Forbidden City Press (*Zijincheng chubanshe*), the Liaoning People's Press, and the Jilin wenshi chubanshe, have large numbers of Qing titles in their book lists.

The new interpretations of the Qing period rest on a large body of secondary literature published in the last two decades. New works have advanced our knowledge of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, when Nurgaci (1559–1626) and Hongtaiji (1592–1643) unified the tribes of northeast Asia by force and laid down the foundations of Qing power (Zhou Yuanlian 1984, 1986; Wakeman 1985; Wang Zhonghan 1988; Zhang and Guo 1988). Accounts of the creation of the banner nobility, based on archival sources, have filled an important gap in the literature (Yang

¹See also QLSY, the "Grand Council Record Books" for the Qianlong reign (1736–95), published recently by the Number One Historical Archives and briefly described by Bartlett 1991, 213.

²For a listing of these catalogues, see Crossley and Rawski 1993, n. 4.

and Zhou 1986). Studies of the pre-1644 capitals (Shenyang 1987; Yan 1989, 365–93) supply concrete examples of the ways in which these political centers blended Sinic and northeast Asian political elements, a theme repeated in analyses of the Qing capitals of Peking and Rehe (Zhou Suqin 1995; Steinhardt 1990; Forêt 1992).

We now know a great deal about the individual rulers of the Qing dynasty, thanks to book-length biographies of every emperor and of notables like Dorgon, Empress Dowager Cixi, and Prince Gong (QDLZ). Studies of the Qing mausolea (Yu 1985; Chen Baorong 1987) and the demographic history of the Qing imperial lineage (Lee and Guo 1994) have produced new information about the life expectancy and living conditions of Qing rulers. Other investigations of palace ladies, imperial princes, and the imperial guards provide an unprecedented array of information concerning the Qing court (QDGT), including the lives of its eunuchs (Xu and Li 1986; Dan 1989; Yang Zhengguang 1990). Further perspectives on life in the Qing capital come from reminiscences by contemporary descendants of Mongol and Manchu princedoms (Jin 1988, 1989a; Jin and Zhou 1988), while studies of the distribution of banner families in Peking (Jin 1989b) and analyses of the Manchuization of Peking dialect (Chang Yingsheng 1993) and Peking place names (Zhang Qingchang 1990) remind us of its non-Han history.

Nor has scholarly output been confined to the view from the capital. Academic institutes in the former peripheries of the Qing empire—the northeast provinces, Inner Mongolia, Qinghai, Xinjiang, and Tibet—have since the 1980s also published many historical articles, based on Chinese, Tibetan, Mongolian, Uighur, and Manchu-language materials, which focus on Qing relations with these localities. These studies have introduced new perspectives and interpretations into scholarly discourse (Ahmad 1970; Millward 1993; Wang Xiangyun 1995). We know a great deal more about the Qing court's interaction with non-Han minorities than ever before.

Publications of oral legends collected by folklorists have significantly expanded our understanding of Manchu culture and the cultures of other Tungus and Mongol peoples (Fu 1990; Fu and Meng 1991; Stuart and Li 1994). Daur stories about intrigues in Mugden (Mukden) and Sibo Mongol recitals of the exploits of the great Kangxi emperor testify to the Manchu impact on the northeastern peoples (Stuart, Li, and Shelear 1994; Pang 1994). Variations of the creation myth still circulating in oral form in the northeast have been compared to the Qing written version that became part of Manchu identity (Tong 1992; Chen Huixue 1991; Crossley 1985). Scholars studying the Manchu-language shamanic code, *besei toktobuha Manjusai wecere metere kooli bithe*, printed in 1778 (Di Cosmo forthcoming; Tao 1992; Wang Honggang 1988) have looked at the impact of this compilation on popular practice in order to understand the effect of Qing policies on northeast shamanism.

Qing scholars today agree with Ho that the Qing was “without doubt” “the most successful dynasty of conquest in Chinese history” (Ho 1967, 191). The Qing empire laid the territorial foundations of the modern Chinese nation-state. What is at issue is not the magnitude of the Qing achievement, but Ho's statement that “the key to its [Qing] success was the adoption by early Manchu rulers of a policy of systematic sinicization” (Ho 1967, 191). The new scholarship suggests just the opposite: the key to Qing success, at least in terms of empire-building, lay in its ability to use its cultural links with the non-Han peoples of Inner Asia and to differentiate the administration of the non-Han regions from the administration of the former Ming provinces.

Interpretations of Qing history lie at the foundations of contemporary Chinese nationalism. When Ho Ping-ti wrote about the Qing period as a milestone along the

developmental path of China as a nation-state, he expressed an academic consensus which is being reevaluated in response to scholarly trends and new research. Many scholars today would contest the conflation of “Qing” and “China” in twentieth-century discourse. Research on Qing history also raises important questions concerning the role of non-Han peoples in the creation of what we call Chinese culture and points to a future research agenda to which I will later return.

Separate and Unequal: The Conquest Elite

The sinicization thesis expressed by Ho echoed the theme of Franz Michael’s pioneering study of the formation of the Qing state (Michael [1942] 1979). The new research presents a Manchu rather than Han-centered perspective with analyses of the formation of pre-1644 policies (Zhang and Guo 1988; Li 1995; Crossley 1990a, 223–28); the state-sponsored invention of the Manchu written language (Chase 1979), the identification of the unified northeast tribes as Manchu (Stary 1990), and the creation of an origin myth (Crossley 1987; Chen Huixue 1991; Li 1995; Qiao 1994).

In contrast to the view that the Han Chinese literati dominated Qing governance, recent work identifies a separate conquest elite, composed of banner nobles and imperial kinsmen, that was superimposed upon the Han Chinese bureaucracy. Analyses of the banner troops garrisoned at strategic sites throughout the empire (Elliott 1993; Im 1981; Dray-Novey 1981) have deepened our understanding of the military organization that existed alongside the civilian bureaucracy. Banner nobles, whether of Manchu, Mongol, or Han descent, were part of a privileged hereditary elite whose titles and favored access to office stemmed from the achievements of their ancestors during the conquest period (Yang and Zhou 1986). Eunuchs, who had dominated palace administration during the preceding dynasty, were supervised during the Qing by bondservants registered in the upper three banners, who staffed the Imperial Household Department (Spence 1966; Torbert 1977). Qing rulers used members of the conquest elite to check the civil service and to staff administrative posts in the peripheral regions of the empire.

Banner nobles and banner officials sat on the Deliberative Council (Du 1986), the major policy-making body during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Beatrice Bartlett’s study of the origins of the Grand Council points to the “Manchu preponderance in government” (Bartlett 1991, 25–26) in the Shunzhi (r. 1644–61) and Kangxi (r. 1662–1722) reigns. The Yongzheng emperor (r. 1723–35) created new inner court organs and staffed them with his own appointees. By employing inner-court agencies to manage the military campaigns against the Mongols, Qing emperors evaded the bureaucratic constraints on imperial power and confined their deliberations to a very small group of personal favorites. Although the “outer court” bureaucrats were eventually able to expand (and thus dilute) the power of the inner-court agencies and to institutionalize the Grand Council, they never succeeded in controlling appointments to the Council from outside the regular bureaucracy. The Qianlong emperor frequently appointed banner nobles who were linked to him through marriage to the Grand Council: the number of Manchus on the Grand Council exceeded Chinese in 73 percent of the sixty years of his reign (Bartlett 1991, 178).

The conquest elite continued to participate in the highest councils of state into the nineteenth century. A study of the decision-making process during the period 1835–50 argues that the Opium War was the product of a stalemate between a reform-

minded Manchu-Mongol faction and an adventurist group of Han Chinese officials in south China, who blamed the Manchu generals for the British victory and wished to mobilize the citizenry to fight the British (Polachek 1992). Decrying the “class chauvinism” of the literati faction which won the debate, Polachek suggests that the policy of the “Manchu clique” might have been a less destructive alternative.

Early Qing rulers developed specialized channels for dealing with Mongol allies and Tibetan prelates. The Office of Sutra Translation, housed in the northwest corner of the Forbidden City, was the first to specialize in Tibetan Buddhist affairs (Wang Jiapeng 1991). Tibetan Buddhism was an important vehicle for extension of Qing control over the Mongols (Zhang Xixin 1988). High prelates like the Qianlong emperor’s spiritual tutor, Rol pa’i rdo rje (1717–86), the lCang skya Khutukhtu, negotiated on behalf of the throne over the successor to the seventh Dalai Lama (1757), and persuaded the Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu, spiritual leader of the Khalkha Mongols, to remain neutral during the 1756 Chingunjav revolt (Wang Xiangyun 1995).

The conquest elite also dominated Qing administration of the northeast, Mongolia, Tibet, and Turkestan, the “New Territory” (Xinjiang). For most of the dynasty, these territories were not incorporated into the framework of provincial administration that was under the Six Boards: Xinjiang became a province only in 1884, and the northeastern provinces of Fengtian, Jilin, and Heilongjiang were created in 1907. Neither Mongolia, Qinghai, nor Tibet was ever converted into provinces during the Qing. Qing documents referred to these newly acquired peripheral regions as the “outer” (*wai*) domains, which were thus classified apart from the “inner” (*nei*) domains made up of the former Ming territory. While the civil service bureaucracy, dominated by Han Chinese, dealt with provincial administration within China Proper (the territory within the Great Wall), the Court of Colonial Affairs (Lifanyuan) and banner officials supervised Qing ritual and administrative relations with the non-Han territories (Chia 1993; Zhao Yuntian 1995).

Of course, the conquest elite was not a monolithic group. There are many studies of the factional politics within the Manchu ruling elite during the first decades of Qing rule (Kessler 1976; Oxnam 1975; Yan 1983; Zhou and Zhao 1986), of debates on the Yongzheng succession (S. Wu 1979; Yang Zhen 1993), and of the struggle between the banner lords and the emperor, which culminated in their subjugation to the imperial will (Hosoya 1968; Feng 1985, chap. 8). Imperial kinsmen became pillars of the dynasty, serving in the imperial guards and performing a variety of diplomatic, military, and security functions for the throne (Chang and Li 1993) during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Rulership in a Multiethnic Empire

A Manchu-centered perspective is particularly important in reassessing the Qing empire. The territorial expansion which culminated in 1759 with the incorporation of the Tarim Basin and Zungharia occurred within a larger context of multistate rivalry, first between the Manchus and Mongols, and thereafter between the Russians and the Qing, for control of Inner Asia (Khordakovsky 1992; Bergholz 1993; Millward 1993). The most important factors influencing Qing expansion came from outside the Great Wall and not from within the political arena dominated by Han Chinese literati.

The new research forces us to focus more sharply on the ability of the Manchus to bind warriors from a variety of cultural backgrounds to their cause. Manchus constituted only a fraction of the banner forces that swept south of the Great Wall to conquer the Ming territories (Fang 1950). The Manchu conquest of the Ming lands was achieved with a multiethnic force, including a mixture of sinicized Manchus, Mongols, and Chinese “transfrontiersmen” living in northeast Asia (Wakeman 1985). We might ascribe the Jurchen/Manchu skill in coalition-building to the geohistorical conditions of their homeland in northeast Asia. Stretching eastward from the Great Mongolian plateau north to the densely forested *taiga* and south to the fertile Liao River plain, the northeast’s three different ecosystems (Lattimore 1940, 105, 113–14), brought nomads, hunting/fishing peoples, and sedentary agriculturalists in close cultural contact.

By the middle of the sixteenth century, Jurchen living in the northeast were divided into three tribal groupings which approximated the ecological divisions. The “wild” Jurchen lived as hunters and fishers in the far north; along the Nen and Hulan Rivers, the Haixi Jurchen lived alongside Mongols (Lattimore 1934, 171–73), and the Jianzhou Jurchen who resided in the south were exposed to commercial and cultural influences from Korea and the Ming (Rossabi 1982). But sinicization does not adequately describe Jianzhou Jurchen culture during Nurgaci’s time. Sedentary agriculturalists, they also raised livestock, prized horsemanship and mounted archery, and loved hunting.

Mongol allies were vital to the Manchu conquest. Since these alliances were usually cemented by marriage exchanges, early Qing emperors claimed Mongol as well as Manchu ancestry (Hua 1983, Rawski 1991). Mongolian and Manchu were the primary languages during the crucial conquest decades before 1644 (Li 1995, 85; Guan 1988, 54). Several of Nurgaci’s sons and nephews bore Mongolian names or were given Mongol honorific titles (Liu 1994, 172–73). The many shared roots of Manchu and Mongolian words relating to livestock, livestock rearing, riding paraphernalia, and even agriculture reflect the close historical interaction of Jurchen and Mongols in this region (Liu 1994). The Manchus borrowed heavily from the Mongols in creating their famed banner organization, while many Chinese elements in the pre-1644 Manchu state were actually filtered through the Mongols (Farquhar 1968, 1971).

Earlier Chinese generalizations concerning the sinicization of the Qing emperors relied heavily on the official Chinese-language records. The determination of the rulers to present themselves to their Chinese subjects as Confucian monarchs is evident in their acquisition of Chinese, their acceptance of the Confucian canon as the foundation for the civil service examinations, their patronage of Chinese art and literature, and the Confucian content of their decrees. The rulers also modified Jurchen marriage practices and switched from cremation to burial to conform to Chinese prejudices (Rawski 1991, 1988). Filiality was developed to new heights as an essential prerequisite for rulership (Rawski 1996). No one can deny that the Manchus portrayed themselves as Chinese rulers. What is at issue is whether this was the complete imperial image. The archival materials strongly support the argument that the Manchus disseminated different images of rulership to the different subject peoples of their empire.

The ideologies created by the Manchu leaders drew on Han and non-Han sources. The earliest title claimed by Nurgaci was the title of Kundulen khan (*han* in Manchu), meaning “Venerated Ruler” in Mongolian. As Pamela Crossley (1992) has explained, the concepts underlying the khanship differ significantly from those supporting the

Chinese emperorship. After Chinggis, the title “khan of khans” or supreme khan (*kaghan*) was the ultimate political goal sought by ambitious tribal leaders in the steppe world. But the “khan of khans” was not a Chinese emperor. His power was based on the much more loosely integrated tribal confederations that emerged from time to time in the steppe world and was conditional on the acquiescence of tribal chieftains. This title—and the political conditions it implied—formed the political context of Nurgaci’s Later Jin dynastic rule. Mongols throughout the Qing dynasty referred to the Qing emperor as “Great Khan” (*bogdo kaghan*).³

Tibetan Buddhism provided the symbolic vocabulary for further refinements of a non-Han model of rulership directed at the Mongols and Tibetans. The *cakravartin* or Buddhist king emerged in China after the fall of the Han dynasty (202 A.D.). The *cakravartin* is a world conqueror, a universal ruler. In the fourteenth century, *cakravartin* kingship was modified by the incorporation of the Tibetan notion of reincarnated lines of spiritual descent (Wylie 1978). In what we might interpret as an adaptation of the Confucian idea of an “orthodox line of descent” which linked legitimate dynasties to one another in a continuous genealogy of rulership (*zhengtong*) (Wechsler 1985, 136; Chan 1991), we have after the fourteenth century a Buddhist “orthodox line of descent” which identified a line of reincarnated *cakravartin* rulers that began with Chinggis and continued through Khubilai.

In 1635, a year before he proclaimed the establishment of the Qing dynasty, Hongtaiji received the *yi-dam* consecration and thus the powers of the deity Mahākāla, a seven-armed warlike god known as a Protector of the (Buddhist) Law (Grupper 1980). Later Qing rulers were depicted as Manjusri, the bodhisattva of compassion and wisdom, whose cult was centered on the temples at Wutaishan in north China (Farquhar 1978). Thangkas depicting the Qianlong emperor as Manjusri were produced in the palace workshops in Beijing; one now hangs in a chapel in the Potala in Lhasa, Tibet (Lin 1991).

Concepts of emperorship changed after 1644 as the empire expanded. Using Manchu-language sources, Pamela Crossley (forthcoming) argues that the eighteenth-century Qing concept of universal emperorship differed significantly from Chinese precedents. Whereas Confucians assumed that their principles were universally applicable, the core of the Qing policy was a universal rulership based on the submission of divergent peoples, whose cultures would remain separate. The Qianlong emperor (r. 1736–95) identified himself as the ruler of five peoples: the Manchus, Mongols, Tibetans, Uighurs, and Chinese (Crossley 1985). Under his reign, the Qing tried to preserve the cultural boundaries separating these five peoples, while attempting to sinicize the ethnic minorities living in south and southwest China. The languages of the “five peoples” were officially enshrined as the languages of the empire, and the emperor commissioned translations, dictionary compilations, and other projects to promote each language. The emperor himself, as the crucial link uniting these diverse peoples, learned Manchu, Chinese, Mongolian, Uighur, and Tibetan (Jin 1992, 78).

Despite his rhetoric, the Qianlong emperor and other Qing rulers could not help but have a profound impact on the societies and economies of the peripheral regions. Eliminating opponents and rewarding allies had the effect of restructuring the social hierarchies of the “outer territories.” The Qing successfully eroded autonomous sources

³Pozdneyev 1896, 331ff. The same biography of the rJe btsun dam pa Khutukhtus, the highest Tibetan Buddhist prelate of the Khalkha Mongols, has been translated and annotated by Charles Bawden (1961).

of power and prestige to establish themselves as the source of all secular authority. Mongol nobles now bore Qing titles which could not be passed to descendants without the emperor's approval (Chia 1992). Qing patronage of the dGe lugs pa sect ensured its continued dominance in Tibet and among the Mongols, but the price for imperial favor was the assertion of the imperial authority to recognize rebirths and approve appointments of high prelates (Petech 1973). In the Muslim-dominated Tarim Basin, the court put new regulations in place that eroded the power of the *begs*, local notables descended from a sedentarized steppe aristocracy, by removing their hereditary right to office and limiting their authority (Miao 1987). Mongol, Muslim, and Tibetan leaders above a certain rank were summoned to the Qing capitals for audience on a rotating schedule and provided with gifts and honors reaffirming their high status.

Qing bureaucratic administration broke down the traditional life-styles of pastoral populations in the peripheries. Emperors incorporated hunting/fishing peoples like the Daur, Ewenk, and Oroqen into the banners and moved them into garrisons to defend the northeast against Russian incursions (Xu 1992). Mongol pastoralism was profoundly altered when the Qing allocated pasturelands to tribes, organized them into banners and leagues, and assigned *amban* (high officials) to adjudicate tribal disputes. After annihilating the Zunghars, the Qing established a military government with its headquarters in Urumqi. They shrewdly moved Dong'an Muslims from northwest China into Turkestan and used them against the Turkic-speaking Muslims, and one sect against another (He and Wang 1989; Togan 1992).

Qing policies also significantly altered the cultures of the peripheries. During the Qing large amounts of literature were written in the languages of the periphery, and more people living in these regions became literate. Banner schools educated the sons of the ruling local elites in several languages. Northeastern peoples like the Daur, who had no written language of their own, learned Manchu and began to write their own literature using Manchu script (Badarongga 1993). Classified as "new Manchus" (*ice manju*) in the seventeenth century, the Daur, Ewenk, and Oroqen were culturally "Manchuized." Banner schools taught Mongols to read and write Mongolian, and imperial patronage made Peking an important center of Tibetan Buddhist printing in Mongolian (Heissig 1954). Imperially commissioned multilingual dictionaries in the five official languages contributed to the gradual standardization of languages that, in their spoken form, were highly diverse.

Trading contacts with the peripheries grew during the Qing and significantly changed many peripheral economies. Iron implements stimulated the expansion of agriculture in the northeast; the rifle, introduced through Russian and Qing trade, ultimately supplanted the bow and arrow and weakened the communal basis of traditional hunting practices, while the court's demand for marten skins and other northeast products led to the commoditization of the hunting economy (Daur 1987; Ewenk 1983; Oroqen 1983). By promoting free trade between its "inner" domains and Xinjiang in order to help provision their troops, the Qing stimulated Han Chinese mercantile migration into the region and provided support for the conversion of the region to provincial status in 1884 (Millward 1993).

Non-Han Conquest Regimes

The revisions of Qing history described above are consonant with the recent scholarship on earlier conquest states (Franke and Twitchett 1994). Owen Lattimore's

classic analysis (Lattimore 1940) of the nomadic relationship with China was challenged in 1989 by Thomas Barfield, who argued that the relationship between the nomads and China was not confrontational but symbiotic. Cycles of unification and dissolution within China and the steppe were closely tied to one another, because “ultimately the state organization of the steppe needed a stable China to exploit” (Barfield 1989, 131). The most efficient method for nomads to obtain Chinese textiles and other products was to ally with Chinese rulers and obtain these goods by treaty. Chinese states, for their part, also learned that a more effective (and cheaper) alternative to fighting the nomads was to co-opt them with subsidies in exchange for military aid. This was the strategy adopted by the Uighur kaghan who preserved the Tang dynasty after the An Lushan uprising (755 A.D.).

Barfield also pointed to the centrality of the mixed ecological zones found in Turkestan and Manchuria in the development of conquest regimes capable of ruling the sedentary agricultural society of China. Whereas the steppe environment could only support the nomad confederacy, a loosely organized coalition of tribes which dissolved without a continual flow of resources, what Barfield called “Manchurian” states which shared important cultural elements from both worlds were more successful in integrating the steppe and agrarian societies.

Recent studies of the conquest regimes which ruled north and northwest China from the tenth to the fourteenth centuries partly affirm but also partly challenge Barfield’s thesis. Under Khitan, Tangut, Jurchen, and Mongol rule, “Chinese-style bureaucratic governance became the political norm . . . and was adopted and adapted by regimes outside Chinese control and beyond what had been traditionally Chinese territory” (Franke and Twitchett 1994, 2). These were hybrid regimes that displayed new capabilities for ruling sedentary as well as nomadic peoples. Yet, although the Khitan and Jurchen were indeed “Manchurian” states, the Tanguts and Mongols originated in the steppe.

Like the Qing, the political skills of the Xixia, Liao, Jin, and Yuan dynasties were developed through interactions with other emerging states within a multistate context. Each ruling group combined parts of East Asia and Inner Asia into multiethnic empires that included nomads and agriculturalists. All employed non-Han as well as Han Chinese officials and created administrations that were differentiated by the ethnicity of the regional population. Different laws applied to different peoples. The non-Han ruling houses were eclectic in their political institutions. Thus the Khitan used Turkic titles of offices (Twitchett and Tietze 1994, 46); Jin rulers, like Chinggis, may have borrowed from the Liao (via the Uighurs) when they reorganized their followers into decimal units. The concept of universal emperorship, which was raised to new heights by Chinggis Khan, owed as much to Uighur as to Chinese influence (Franke 1978). Chinggis should thus be seen as the heir to a multigenerational process by which Mongols adapted to the political demands of an empire-state.

Although the Liao, Jin, Xixia, and Yuan regimes employed Han Chinese in government service, each resisted sinicization. All four governments created their own national scripts. The Khitan large script (920) and small script (925) were the basis for the Jurchen large and small script devised in the twelfth century. Mongol writing, created in the same period, borrowed the Uighur script, which was itself borrowed from the Sogdians. Unlike Khitan, Jurchen, and Tangut, which were neither alphabetic nor phonetic, the early Mongol script (and Manchu, which was based on the Mongol script) was alphabetic.

All of these conquest regimes pursued bilingual or multilingual language policies. The Jin retained the small Khitan script even after they had invented a Jurchen writing system: Khitan continued to be used in the Jin bureaucracy until the last decade of the twelfth century. Khitan, Jurchen, Tangut, and Mongol dynasty coins had bilingual inscriptions. The rulers had Buddhist, Confucian, and other works translated into their own national languages.

The Qing dynasty represents the culminating phase of the unification of Inner and East Asia. Many aspects of Qing history parallel those of the border regimes of the tenth to fourteenth centuries by conscious design: the founder of the Qing ruling house claimed descent from the Jurchen rulers of the Jin, and his successors attempted to perpetuate this historical link in their own policies. Like the Jin, the Qing first created state structures in northeast Asia. After they entered the Ming capital, Beijing, and performed the Confucian rituals that enabled them to become "Sons of Heaven," i.e., Chinese emperors, they established a summer capital in Rehe, which they believed to be the site of an earlier Jin capital. The Manchu rulers followed the custom of their non-Han predecessors in moving between winter and summer capitals. At Mulan, the huge hunting park created north of Rehe, they brought together their Mongol and other Inner Asian allies in annual hunts. Living in Peking, surrounded by the splendors of Han Chinese culture, they developed in the eighteenth century a definition of Manchu identity that stressed mounted archery and fluency in the Manchu language.

The Qing dynasty also followed the precedent set by the Liao, Xixia, and Mongol regimes in adopting Tibetan Buddhism as a symbolic language of rule. Their incorporation of Inner Asian and Chinese ideological themes into a new kind of rulership was, we would argue, precisely the key to their extraordinary achievements: not only the conquest of a vast territory spanning the nomadic and sedentary worlds, but the ability to create a stable empire that lasted for several centuries. The permanence of the Manchu achievement is evident in the contemporary shape of China. The modern Chinese state which exists today is a product of the long historical interaction of Inner and East Asia that has been outlined above.

Qing History and Chinese Nationalism

Qing history is directly relevant to the continuing tensions between ethnic nationalism and the creation of a multiethnic nation state (Townsend 1992). Shortly after the Revolution of 1911 ended the Qing dynasty, Sun Yat-sen and other nationalist leaders rejected a definition that would have made the Chinese nation-state coterminous with the Han Chinese people who constitute the majority of the population. The Provisional Law of the Republic (1912) specifically identified Mongolia, Tibet, and Qinghai as integral parts of the nation, even though these territories were historically recent additions to the empire created by the Manchus.⁴ By its omission of the many ethnic minorities residing in China's south and southwest regions, Sun's discussion of the ethnic issue in terms of the "five peoples" identified by the Qianlong emperor two hundred years earlier highlighted his geopolitical concern with the attempts of the Mongols, Muslims, and Tibetans to form their own autonomous states.

⁴Xinjiang and the northeast were not cited because they had already been administratively transformed into provinces.

From the outset the new republic struggled with a fundamental contradiction between Han nationalism and the desire to retain all of the Qing territories in the new nation-state. The creation of a “Han” identity, which today encompasses 92 percent of the population of the PRC, dates from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. According to scholars, the earliest self-identifications found in Chinese-language texts refer to the “Hua” and “Xia” as “civilized” people, in contrast to the barbarians (Dow 1982; Han and Li 1984). The term “Han” emerged in the context of a discussion framed by Social Darwinism and Chinese nationalism, when scholars like Liang Qichao responded to the European notion of race by claiming that the yellow race was dominated by the Han people, who “were the initiators of civilization and had civilized the whole of Asia” (Dikötter 1992, 86). As formulated by Sun Yat-sen, the term “Han” denoted a race.

Although successive constitutions defined China as a multiethnic political community, China’s leaders from Sun Yat-sen through Mao Zedong have consistently argued that the country was rightfully dominated by Han Chinese. Liang Qichao had warned that the political consequences of defining the new nation in terms of Han culture alone would be the dissolution of the Qing empire. Liang sought to retain the Qing peripheries. Although he urged that a “greater nationalism” (*da minzuzhuyi*) be created to bring the Manchus, Mongols, Uighur, and Tibetans into the nation, Liang’s own writings raised the possibility of assimilation. After all, Liang noted, Manchus were for the most part indistinguishable from Chinese. The European identification of coresidence, common blood, speech, religion, custom, and livelihood as the basis for a nation-state was thus already partially fulfilled (Kataoka 1984, 284).

Sun Yat-sen also occasionally spoke about the need to rise above existing ethnic identities to create a new “national people” (*Zhonghua minzu, guomin*) (Sun 1973, 1:2, 5; 2:397, 404). In the Sun-Joffe Manifesto (1923) and in the “Fundamentals of National Reconstruction” drawn up at the first Guomindang National Congress in 1924, Sun would proclaim the right of ethnic minorities to determine their own political future. But Sun also suggested that cooperatives should be organized to promote the migration of Han Chinese into the minority regions (Kataoka 1984, 298), and justified an assimilationist policy by identifying it as the contemporary counterpart of the historical process of sinicization. Chiang Kai-shek continued this theme by arguing that since ethnic minorities inhabiting peripheral regions were already part of the greater Chinese race, they could have no separate identity (Benson 1990, 12–14).

Theories of assimilation developed in the twentieth century paralleled earlier intellectual attempts to integrate the experience of conquest into a Confucian framework. The Confucian claim to cultural universalism defined Chinese identity on cultural rather than ethnic grounds and strove for incorporation of other peoples into Confucian civilization (Dow 1982).⁵ This perspective was severely challenged during the Northern Song confrontation with the Jurchen Jin in the twelfth century (Trauzettel 1975), when a few scholars proposed “a circumscribed notion of the Han community and fatherland (*guo*) in which the barbarians had no place” (Duara 1993, 786). Even if one accepts Duara’s argument that their views were a kind of premodern nationalist consciousness, writers like Fang Xiaoru (1357–1402) and Wang Fuzhi (1619–92) remained in the distinct minority until the late nineteenth century. As the debates over assimilation through education of the non-Han peoples in southwest

⁵That Chinese attitudes towards ethnic minorities included a strong “Orientalist” component has been noted by a number of scholars recently: see Rowe 1994; Millward 1994.

China demonstrate (Rowe 1994), the Confucian ideal of cultural transformation remained alive through the Qing dynasty.

The emergence of Han nationalism inevitably stimulated the formation of ethnic identities in the peripheries of the former Qing empire. Crossley (1990b) has urged us not to attribute anachronistically too strong an ethnic consciousness to the early Manchu rulers. Although Nurgaci and Hongtaiji helped to create a Manchu community by commissioning the creation of a written language and designating the very name, “Manchu,” by which the unified Jurchen were to be known, the Manchu, Mongol, and Han designations of the banners were not strict ethnic categories: there were Mongols in Manchu as well as Mongol banners, Han in Manchu as well as Han banners. Crossley concludes that “culturally the important distinctions of the early Qing period lay not between the Manchus and the Chinese-martial Bannermen but between the Bannermen of all origins and the conquered Chinese” (Crossley 1987, 779). Not until the eighteenth century did Manchu rulers reinvent ethnic categories, but exceptions, involving the transfer of “meritorious” non-Manchu households from Han and Mongol banners to Manchu banner registration, could be found into the middle of the nineteenth century (Crossley 1987, 779).

The Revolution of 1911 freed Manchus, Mongols, Uighurs, and Tibetans to create their own independent ethnic states. Loyalty to the Qing dynasty did not automatically translate into loyalty to China: as Nakami Tatsuo points out (Nakami 1984, 146), the Mongols never considered themselves part of a *Zhongguo* (China). Han migration into minority territories during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries exacerbated anti-Han sentiments (Crossley 1990b; Gladney 1991, 81–93). Although the Russians, Japanese, and British influenced the outcomes (Lattimore 1934; Terashima 1984), these independence movements were fundamentally the product of a new ethnic consciousness which was fed by the pan-Mongol and pan-Turanian movements developing outside China’s borders (Khan 1994; Forbes 1986).

In Tibet, the ending of the Qing dynasty brought the Dalai Lama, head of the dGe lugs pa sect and the nominal ruler, back from exile in India. Tibetans expelled the Chinese officials and troops and declared independence. From that point until 1950, Tibet enjoyed *de facto* if not *de jure* independence (Goldstein 1989). The Khalkha Mongols established an independent state in 1912 and put the Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu, their highest-ranked reincarnate in the Tibetan Buddhist hierarchy, at the head of a secular state with the title Bogd Khaghan (“Holy Emperor”) (Humphrey 1994). This was the predecessor of the Mongolian People’s Republic.

The creation of an independent Mongolia attracted Mongols from what is now known as Inner Mongolia (Nakami 1984, 136). Responses within Inner Mongolia from 1910 through the end of World War II ranged from attempts to restore the last Qing emperor to the creation of an Inner Mongolian Revolutionary People’s Party on the Soviet model, which advocated self-determination through revolution (Lattimore 1934, 29–30; Terashima 1984). The strengthening of Mongol identity throughout the early twentieth century was epitomized in the revival of Chinggis Khan’s cult. Prohibited by the socialist rulers of Outer Mongolia, the Japanese, Guomindang, and later Mao Zedong supported the cult center among Inner Mongols (Khan 1994; Liang 1988).

Both the Mongolian and Tibetan movements for independence were sustained by the presence within their borders of peoples belonging predominantly to one ethnic group. The situation was quite otherwise in the far west and northwest, where sectarian disputes divided Turkic-speaking Muslims and historical differences separated Turkic Muslims from the Dongan or “Chinese Muslims” (Gladney 1991).

Scholars have shown that the politics of the far west was also strongly influenced by events in Central Asia. In Gansu, Naqshbandiyya orders vied with each other and against the older Sunni tradition from the late Qing period (Lipman 1984). Even though their attempts to establish a Republic of East Turkestan in 1933, 1944, and 1949 failed, Xinjiang in reality moved out of China's control and into the Russian orbit after 1912 (Dreyer 1976, 22–26; Forbes 1986). Turkic-speaking Muslims rejected the assimilationist discourse of the Guomindang and have proved similarly resistant to PRC policies of ethnic “fusion” (Millward 1994).

Like its predecessors, the People's Republic of China has consistently repressed independence movements and emphasized its determination to retain control of Tibet, Xinjiang, and Inner Mongolia. Since 1949, China's policy toward ethnic minorities has veered between ensuring minority representation within the framework of a unitary state and focusing on the ultimate assimilation of minority peoples (Mackerras 1994). In place of *tonghua*, the phrase used by Sun and other early nationalists to discuss assimilation, PRC scholars talk about “fusion” (*ronghe*), the outcome of a long-term historical process in which nationalities will “influence and learn from each other” (Mackerras 1994, 7). Despite all of the slogans concerning the “unity of nationalities” (*minzu tuanjie*), students of the contemporary scene have noted the continuing persistence of ethnic nationalisms in the PRC (Gladney 1991; Townsend 1992). One scholar has ascribed this phenomenon to the failure of successive modern Chinese states to create one “imagined community” that would constitute the Chinese nation. John Fitzgerald (1996) concludes that China is a “nationless state”.

Conclusions

The disjuncture between Han nationalism and “state nationalism” (Townsend 1992) creates problems for the writing of Chinese history. Han nationalism has deeply influenced the historical discourse throughout the twentieth century (Duara 1995). Contemporary Chinese historians project China's past in terms of its 1911 borders, although it was not until the rise of nationalism that history was written as “a seamless narrative of one realm, the territory of the modern state” (Chatterjee 1993, 95). Since Chinese history is construed as the study of the governments that have ruled over Chinese speakers, nationalism creates problems of interpretation concerning the long periods—over half of its recorded history—when China was conquered and ruled by non-Han peoples.

China as presently constituted is the historical product of the interaction of many different peoples. The size of the Chinese empires varied enormously over time. Unification, which is frequently cited as a hallmark of Chinese identity, occurred only as the culmination of a centuries-long evolution of multiple competing states. The first unified empire, Qin (221–206 B.C.), controlled only a fraction of the territory encompassed by later dynasties. The empire grew during the Han (206 B.C.–220 A.D.) and Tang (618–907) dynasties and was rent asunder during the Six Dynasties (222–559) and the tenth to fourteenth centuries. Under the Mongols (1279–1368) and the Manchus (1644–1911), China (defined as the territory occupied predominantly by speakers of Chinese) was itself incorporated into larger empires that spanned Inner Asia and East Asia. Only a definition of the nation that transcends Han identity can thus legitimately lay claim to the peripheral regions inhabited by non-Han peoples, since these claims rest on the empires created by the Mongols and the Manchus.

“Sinicization”—the thesis that all of the non-Han peoples who have entered the Chinese realm have eventually been assimilated into Chinese culture—is a twentieth-century Han nationalist interpretation of China’s past. Removing sinicization as a central theme in Chinese historiography focuses our attention on the research agenda ahead. We need to reevaluate the historical contributions of the many peoples who have resided in and sometimes ruled over what is today Chinese territory. The task of deconstructing the national-level narrative, which demands that scholars carefully study regional and local cultures in various periods, has already begun in China and abroad, with the startling discoveries of complex jade-working cultures outside the Central Plain that Ho Ping-ti cited as the “cradle of Chinese civilization” (Ho 1976). These new archaeological discoveries suggest multiple origins of the features that we have identified as “Chinese.” Archaeologists have identified a distinctive northeastern cultural complex with ties to the peoples who resided in the Korean peninsula and islands of Japan, that might have contributed to the origins of the Shang state (Nelson 1995, 252). That the homeland of the Jurchen/Manchus developed its own distinctive Neolithic society, epitomized in the Hongshan site, challenges the center-periphery assumptions of Sinology. Multiply this question by the number of these new sites and we have an approximation of the challenge that awaits historians.

I have no doubt that the next thirty years will continue to overturn our generalizations about the significance of Qing history. For the moment, how might we summarize an answer to this question of significance? The Qing was the most successful of China’s dynasties in terms of its territorial expansion. Its success was a consequence of its hybrid origins. A non-Han conquest regime, it drew on multiple sources and adapted ideologies of rulership and administrative structures to the cultures of subject peoples. This strategy was an important factor in its successful consolidation of the empire. But Qing policy yielded unanticipated consequences. By applying its vast resources to the task of educating subject peoples, bureaucratizing steppe regimes, and disseminating published literatures in the languages of subject peoples, Qing rulers actually altered their cultures and societies. The tribal barriers dividing Mongols were lowered; Qing patronage of the dGe lugs pa enabled that sect to dominate rival Tibetan Buddhist orders and unify Tibet. The Qing peace enabled reformist Islamic movements to penetrate and stimulate sectarian quarrels among Turkic Muslims. Harsher policies toward Muslims eventually stimulated peoples divided by sectarian strife to unite against the Han. The Qing peace also stimulated Han Chinese merchants to penetrate the economies of the peripheries and created a backlash amongst indebted ethnic minorities.⁶ Qing policies stimulated changes that paved the way for the ethnic movements of the early twentieth century. In that sense, too, the Qing deserves further attention and study.

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⁶There was armed resistance by Oroqen, Ewenk, and Daur minorities in the northeast after the 1911 Revolution; the activities of the Daur are described in Daur 1987, chap. 5; Hatanaka 1989; Stuart, Li, and Shelear 1994.

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In Defense of Sinicization: A Rebuttal of Evelyn Rawski's “Reenvisioning the Qing”

PING-TI HO

IN HER RECENT PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS, “Reenvisioning the Qing,” Professor Evelyn Sakakida Rawski attacks the “sinicization” theme originally presented as one of the five major aspects of my 1967 article, “The Significance of the Ch’ing Period in Chinese History” (Ho 1967). In her essay—frankly admitted to have been based exclusively on “recent secondary literature”—she states that “a notable outcome of the new scholarship is the rejection of the sinicization thesis and its Han-centered orientation in favor of an empire-building model that emphasizes the importance of the Chinese empire’s cultural links with the non-Han peoples of Inner Asia” (Rawski 1996, 827). It ought to be pointed out at the outset that my 1967 paper was not delivered, as she mistakenly presumed, from the podium of the president of the Association for Asian Studies; for I did not receive this honor until 1975–76, when, after having shifted my research interest so far away from the Ming-Ch’ing period, I addressed the Association with a paper entitled “The Chinese Civilization: A Search for the Roots of its Longevity.” The 1967 paper was an AAS panel presentation, not a presidential address.¹

My Original Multidimensional Thesis

In order to provide readers with the minimum background necessary for judging my reply, I will list briefly the five salient aspects of the Ch’ing heritage presented in that paper, which were largely based on my original research and perspective.

1. The Manchu rulers between 1600 and 1800 made a unique contribution to the creation of the largest consolidated and administratively viable multiethnic empire in China’s long history.
2. The unprecedented population growth during that empire-building period was itself the outcome of more than one century of peace, prosperity, and a series of

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This panel of four papers on Ch’ing history was organized and chaired by the late Mary Wright, who allowed my paper the “maximum” time of only thirty minutes, which accounts for the brevity of the original article.

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fiscal reforms benefitting the poor, including the permanent abolition of compulsory labor services, thus bringing an end to “two thousand years of government oppression.”²

3. The Manchu court carried out a policy of systematic sinicization, with the implementation of the Ch’eng-Chu Neo-Confucian orthodoxy as its core, which not only facilitated the metamorphosis of the Manchu tribal-banner state into a unitary centralized empire but also won the allegiance and dedication of the Confucian elite who saved the “alien” dynasty by eventually wiping out the ethnic Chinese Taiping rebels in fourteen years (1851–64) of life-and-death struggle.
4. The Ch’ing period was one in which traditional political, economic, and social institutions attained greater maturity and in which the economy and society achieved a greater degree of interregional integration.
5. In the fields of material culture, fine arts, printing, and library resources, the Ch’ing period was one of leisurely fulfillment and enrichment.

Even the most basic factors accounting for the decline and fall of the Ch’ing were somewhat different from those that brought down the earlier dynasties. Internally, the unforeseen population explosion created a new set of social and economic problems with which the existing fund of technological knowledge failed to cope. Externally, Ch’ing China was being drawn into a maelstrom of modern world politics by the West, whose culture was in many ways equal to hers and in some crucial ways superior to hers. It was the convergence and interplay of these unprecedented crises that finally brought about the downfall of an otherwise rather remarkable dynasty.

In spite of the constraints under which this paper was prepared, I decided to make it broad-gauged, multidimensional, and sweeping, but intellectually responsible down to even many a necessarily tacit comparison between the Ch’ing and earlier dynasties. For only by planning my paper in this way could I hope to make it fulfill the *Oxford English Dictionary*’s definition of my key title word “significance,” in the sense of “full of meaning or import.” And only by planning my paper in this way could I clearly suggest what I meant by the accompanying diachronic phrase “in Chinese history.”

Professor Rawski’s “Reenvisioning the Qing: The Significance of the Qing in Chinese History” is basically a monothematic bibliographical survey, which is generically quite different from my macrohistorical perspective. I might have ignored it but for the following reasons. Since a complex macrohistorical perspective can be legitimately challenged only by a comparable perspective, what is one to make of a critique that proceeds reductively from a monothematic bibliographical survey? What is one to make of a bibliographical survey that does not always truthfully represent the more balanced views of the authors it relies on? And what is one to make of major distortions of my argument?

A False Dichotomy: Rawski’s Distortion of My Thesis

Professor Rawski tells us that she has chosen as her point of departure my assessment of the Ch’ing period in Chinese history. As a matter of fact, she considers only the third of my five basic points, manages to badly obscure its meaning, and—

²This remark was originally by Yü Cheng-hsieh (1775–1840) and is cited in Ho 1959, 211.

most egregiously—fails to acknowledge the clear recognition presented in the first of my five points: the early Manchu emperors in fact contributed profoundly to the growth of China as a consolidated, multiethnic empire. Although the term “multiethnic” was hardly in wide use thirty years ago, my article plainly referred to the achievement of the Manchus in the creation of an empire consisting of Manchus, Chinese, Mongols, Zunghars, Tibetans, and various aboriginal groups in the mountainous southwestern provinces.

Governing China meant first and foremost developing the capacities to rule China’s many hundreds of million of people, whose numbers increased dramatically between 1650 and 1800. Manchu success at this most challenging task was achieved in large measure by drawing upon a Chinese tradition of policies and institutions. Their relations with other non-Han peoples may not fit post-T’ang conventional notions of Chinese rule, but this hardly means that the core of their strategy of rule was not predicated on Chinese political principles. Recent research on Inner Asian dimensions of Ch’ing rule complements what we already have learned about Ch’ing rule within China’s more densely settled and outlying territories. Rawski constructs a false dichotomy between sinicization and Manchu relations with non-Han peoples of Inner Asia. There is no logical reason to assume that what we have recently learned about Manchu activities means that what we already knew about their rule within China proper and Inner Asia is therefore mistaken.

To reduce the potential for misunderstanding, I should state explicitly that Chinese civilization certainly changes over time, in part because of internal developments and in part because contacts with the very peoples who become sinicized also expand the content of what it can mean to be Chinese. While there are certain elements of Chinese thinking and behavior that have an extremely long historical pedigree, Chinese culture takes on distinctive characteristics in different historical periods as the culture is itself transformed. I must also make clear that the growth of Manchu identification with Chinese norms of behavior and patterns of thought need not exclude other forms of identity. To pose such binary choices, as I think Rawski has done, distorts what individuals experience. Once again, Rawski’s argument posits a false dichotomy between being Manchu and becoming Chinese.

Rawski rejects sinicization without putting in its place an explanation for what the Manchus did and said they were doing in ruling most of China. This failure severely limits her ability to explain how the Manchus were able to cope effectively with the largest population, most persistent political tradition, and most enduring civilization in world history. More fundamentally, her dismissal of the sinicization thesis makes it difficult, if not impossible, to locate the Ch’ing dynasty within the far longer span of Chinese history. Sinicization is a long, complex, and unending process. We cannot appreciate its force without going back to early Chinese history and prehistory.

“Rejection of the Sinicization Thesis”: Rawski vs. International Scholarship

Prior to assessing the bibliographical survey contained in Rawski’s address, I should do justice to its one useful aspect for beginners of Ch’ing history, namely, its listing of some Ch’ing palace archives and Manchu-language sources that have become available during the past twenty-five years. Of these, the most important is the *chün-*

chi-ch'u (Grand Council) archive, which enabled Beatrice S. Bartlett to produce *Monarchs and Ministers: The Grand Council of Mid-Ch'ing China, 1723–1820* (Bartlett 1991), the best contribution to Ch'ing institutional history in any language. Although Bartlett in an earlier article talked about the quantity and “importance” of the Grand Council archive in Manchu, I judge from the archival category-names listed in her article that they are wide-ranging but probably of rather minor importance as compared to the entire series in Chinese (Bartlett 1985). Similarly, other types of increasingly available Manchu-language sources are not quite of the nature and quality that Rawski would have us believe (Rawski 1996, 835; Crossley and Rawski 1993). The judgment of the late Joseph Fletcher, who formed a Manchu class of seven students at Harvard in the fall of 1981, merits our attention:

Despite a certain amount of Manchu literary production in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, including enormous translation projects and some *belles-lettres*, efforts to create a Manchu literary culture of stature had ended in failure. Manchu continued to be used in government documents in an increasingly formalistic and lifeless way until the twentieth century, but a Manchu education was of limited use. (Fletcher 1978, 44)

After acknowledging the useful portion of Rawski's bibliographical survey, we must now turn to its main theme: the multiethnic orientation of the Ch'ing empire, which she has traced back to the Khitan Liao (916–1125) dynasty of conquest. She generalizes thus:

Although the Liao, Jin, Xixia, and Yuan regimes employed Han Chinese in government service, each resisted sinicization. All four governments created their own scripts.

(Rawski 1996, 837)

Like the bulk of her essay, this passage is so nebulous and evasive as to call for careful scrutiny. If I understand it correctly, its “logic” runs like this: (1) she hopes that a mere mention of employing Han Chinese in government service would be a sufficient concession to offset the weighty opinion of international scholarship that all these four conquest regimes eventually became fairly highly or very highly sinicized; (2) hence, the noncommittal (in terms of outcome) statement “each resisted sinicization” could hopefully lead the unwary into believing that such nativist resistance was a success; (3) the “proof” of their success in resisting sinicization was their effort to create their own national scripts from scratch. When a passage of scholarly prose invites so many discrepant meanings, it becomes at best vague or confusing and perhaps at worst meaningless. Moreover, Rawski ignores the fact that after a brief period of native resistance, the newly created scripts inevitably accelerated the absorption of Chinese culture, literature, and institutions, leading to the ultimate obsolescence of the scripts and any related claims for the development of indigenous culture.

The reasons for the failure of Jurchen script to create an adequate Jurchen literary culture are aptly analyzed by a specialist:

The primary impediment to the formal development of Jurchen ethnic literature was the literature of the Jurchen's nearest neighbor, the Han Chinese. Even before the arrival of the Jurchen, the mature, formal, and eloquent structure of Chinese literature had infatuated the Po-hai, Khitan, and other ethnic groups. These peoples abandoned their own languages and literary forms and adopted the Chinese language to articulate

their own passions and thoughts. . . . The Jurchen were certainly no exception in this respect. By 1150 Han Chinese literary forms had already spread widely through the ranks of the Jurchen ruling house and nobility, relegating ethnic forms of literature to the narrow realm of the older generation and the lower classes. But just as ethnic Jurchen literature was edging toward extinction in the 1160s, it gained new life under Chin Shih-tsung's (r. 1161–89) revitalization of Jurchen culture. During this native revival, free lyric compositions, original in structure and form, began to spread. But even advocacy of literature in native Jurchen form could not extirpate the Han Chinese literature that had already taken root among the Jurchen nobility. True Jurchen literature could only run a temporary parallel course with Han Chinese writing until, in the end, it was again engulfed by it.

(Jin 1995, 217; for Khitan script and education, Ch'en Shu 1987, 140–58; for Hsi-Hsia [Tanguts], Chin 1958, 108–26)

There is no need to cite extensively from the sizable multilingual literature on earlier dynasties of conquest to show the invalidity of Rawski's basic view. Suffice it here just to examine Rawski's most specific bibliographical statement: "The revisions of Qing history described above are consonant with the recent scholarship on earlier conquest states (Franke and Twitchett 1994)" (Rawski 1996, 836). Let us read and reflect on what Herbert Franke, with his incomparable fund of knowledge on China's dynasties of conquest, has to say about the significance of the Jurchen Chin dynasty in Chinese history:

There existed no "China" as a whole in the twelfth and thirteen centuries; rather, there was Chinese civilization that took on very different shapes in the north and in the south. . . . Traditionalism certainly contributed much to the emergence of a feeling of a separate northern identity. Once the Jurchen had given up trying to conquer the south, a sense of growing stability must have pervaded the intellectual elite, and it is strange that there were no widespread defections to the south, to the national Chinese state of Sung. It seems that the Chin state and its ruling elite developed a strong sense of their own legitimacy. They considered themselves to be the guardians of the "real" Chinese traditions of the T'ang and Northern Sung. The surprising endurance of the Chin against overwhelming odds after 1206, the survival of a state sandwiched between the revanchist Sung and the invincible Mongols, can perhaps be partly explained by the increased feeling of legitimacy that must have underlain the loyalty of officials and soldiers, many of whom preferred death to surrender.

The Chin confirmed their own inclusion in the legitimate succession of Chinese dynasties in 1203 when the government proclaimed that henceforth the element earth would be assigned to the Chin dynasty, succeeding Sung whose element had been fire. This might appear to the modern mind as a senseless speculation, but to every Chinese in the Middle Ages it meant much more: At the latest in 1203 the Jurchen State of Chin had, in its own eyes, become fully Chinese and a legitimate link in the chain of successive dynasties on the highest, if rarefied, level of cosmological speculation. This had taken less than a century to accomplish. But in that century the Chin had traveled the whole way from a rustic tribal society to a state that in many respects could be considered a fully legitimate element in the Chinese world order. Modern historians, too, might well consider Chin as more than just a barbarian interlude in Chinese history. There can be little doubt that the achievement of Chin, and the conviction of Chin intellectuals that they represented the true Chinese values, contributed much to the cultural vitality that enabled them to perpetuate Chinese ways of life under the crushing onslaught of the Mongols.

(Franke 1994, 319–20)

Instead of being “consonant with the recent scholarship on earlier conquest states” best exemplified by Herbert Franke, Rawski’s generalization is actually diametrically opposed to Franke’s. In fact, the sinicization of all earlier alien conquest states has been so generally taken for granted by the scholarly world that Jacques Gernet in his *A History of Chinese Civilization*, the most comprehensive single-volume treatise on Chinese history widely accepted in the Western world, discusses the Liao, Hsi-Hsia, and the Jurchen Chin under the chapter title of “the Sinicized Empires” (Gernet 1982). To contradict international scholarship without being able to offer one’s own superior erudition is astounding enough. But it is beyond belief that Rawski should have failed completely to anticipate that one needs only to make a simple bibliographical check to unveil her intellectual disingenuousness.

Sinicization: Phases, Facets, and Perennial Significance

The proto-Sinids made their debut in the Loess Highlands of North China about 9000 years ago. A millennium later neolithic Yang-shao villages began to appear in large numbers on loess terraces along numerous tributaries and small streams both north and south of the Wei River. The loess is porous, textually homogeneous, rich in minerals, and “self-fertilizing” (Pumpelley 1908, I: 7). It thus enabled Yang-shao farmers to practice sedentary millet farming right from the very beginning, in contrast to the slash-and-burn type of shifting agriculture that characterized the rest of the neolithic world. Consequently, from thousands of Yang-shao cultural sites discovered since 1949, it would appear that the density of Yang-shao settlements might be many times higher than those of any other region in the entire neolithic period, at least up to the beginnings of irrigation in lower Mesopotamia. It would also appear that from Yang-shao times onwards the impact of the early Sinids upon the surrounding peoples was already partially one of extent and numbers.

The typical Yang-shao settlements consisted of a centrally located large assembly hall, residential quarters, pottery kilns, and a cemetery noted for its neatly planned graves. The constant “communion” between the living and the dead gave rise to an ancestral cult which by the second millennium B.C. had become the most highly developed in the annals of men. This in turn stimulated a parallel institutional development, which finally resulted in the establishment of an extensive network of the *tsung-fa* (major-lineage-dominated) patrilineal kinship system shortly after the Chou conquest of the Shang in 1027 B.C.

The one focal value revealed in Chou literature and bronze inscriptions is the overriding concern of the Chou people for biological and social perpetuation. This is indeed to be expected of a people whose religious core was a most sophisticated ancestor worship. What is not so easily explained is that Chou literature also reveals a more ancient inclination of the Sinitic people to extend such strong concern for perpetuation from “self” to “others.” Yü, the founder of the so-called Hsia dynasty who lived a full millennium before the inception of the Chou, searched out and ennobled the descendants of various ancient ruling houses, including one of the non-Sinitic Eastern I (barbarian), in order to perpetuate their lines of descent and to ensure the continuance of their ancestral sacrificial rites.

As to the origin of this magnanimous spirit that was to guide the ancient Sinitic people in their intra- and interethnic relationships, we can at best only speculate because archaeological data are here mute. It is my guess that, since the loessic soil made it possible for large numbers of Yang-shao farmers to live closely together along numerous small streams, they had learned instinctively and empirically that the only way to avoid unnecessary violence and bloodshed was to respect each other's territoriality (as do primates and large carnivorous animals) and rights to survival. Psychically, therefore, the circle demarcating "us" and "them" was constantly being enlarged in favor of the former, once the benefits of peaceful coexistence were better understood (Ho 1996). Over time, notions and norms that guided dealings among various feudal states and ethnic groups crystallized into what may be regarded as a unique Sinitic ethical precept, best expressed in Confucius' *Analects*: "Restore states that have been annexed and revive lines that have become extinct (*hsing-mieh-kuo, chi-chüeh-shih*)" (Lau 1992, 201).

While this ethical precept could at best only mitigate the unceasing processes of annexing small and weak states by the large and powerful, it does help to explain how and why the ancient Sinitic world had kept on expanding. Mencius explains it best:

Shun [the legendary sage king before Yü] was originally an Eastern barbarian; King Wen [of Chou] was originally a Western barbarian. . . . their native places were a thousand *li* apart, and there were a thousand years between them. But when they got their wish, and carried their principles into practice throughout the Middle Kingdom, it was like uniting the two halves of a seal.

(Legge I and II: 316–17, with minor alteration in phrasing)

What Mencius really meant to say is that the original "Sinitic" group was relatively small and that any subsequent leaders of non-Sinitic tribes or states who adopted the original Sinitic way of life and contributed to its enrichment were retrospectively to be regarded as sage-kings of the progressively enlarging Sinitic world. This saying of Mencius suggests that long before the rise of Chou the fundamental criterion for defining membership in the Sinitic world was the awareness of a common cultural heritage rather than rigid racial or ethnic identity (Ho 1975, 344). It is also prophetic because throughout the following millennia this deeply ingrained culture-orientation in interethnic relationships has largely accounted for the fact that China has become a state with fifty-six officially defined "nationalities."

From the standpoint of sinicization, China's long imperial age (221 B.C.–A.D. 1911) may be conveniently demarcated by the end of the Turk-dominated Five Dynasties and the inception of the Sung in 959–960. Prior to this watershed, the polyethnic empires of Han (206 B.C.–A.D. 220) and T'ang (618–907) were the outcome of Chinese expansion and conquest. After 960 it was the aliens who succeeded in partial or total conquest of China. Although the alien dynasties of conquest—the Khitan Liao, Jurchen Chin, Mongol Yuan, and Manchu Ch'ing—have attracted most attention of Western students of Chinese history, the various pre-960 non-Chinese groups may have played a far more important role in the growth of China as a multiethnic state.

This may be partially shown statistically. The great steppe empire of the Huns (Hsiung-nu), which reached the height of its power around 200 B.C., boasted of between 300,000 and 400,000 horse-riding archers, not including a fairly large Wu-huan population enslaved by them for farm and sundry work. (Wu-huan was one of the Tung-hu, literally the "Eastern Barbarian," groups who belonged to the proto-

Mongolic linguistic family.) This would mean a total Hun population of between 1.5 and 2 million. This figure takes on extra meaning when we realize that the then population of Han China probably did not amount to one-third of the peak former Han population of nearly 60 million in A.D. 2. In other words, the ratio of Hsiung-nu to Chinese population is likely to have been 1:10. We find a similar situation in the early seventh century: a total population of 2 million for the Turkish empire as compared to a total of less than 3 million registered households during the reign of T'ang T'ai-tsung (627–49); and the Turks were but one of a score or so of non-Chinese ethnic groups within and without T'ang China.

What intrigues me the most is the situation in the fourth century, certainly the most chaotic in Chinese history. The incessant wars among various ethnic groups, devastation of large tracts of farm land, forced mass migrations, and recurrent famines and epidemics all exacted the heaviest toll on Chinese lives. On the other hand, all the major non-Chinese ethnic groups were of considerable size. There were well over 100,000 sinicized Huns who had been allowed to live along and within the Great Wall and who were the first to revolt against the Chin Dynasty and to establish a regional regime. The western part of the Chin empire, from Kansu, Kokonor, southwards to Szechwan and Yunnan, was teeming with Ti farmers and Ch'iang herdsmen, both of Tibetan stock. The one non-Chinese ethnic group destined to unify North China was the Hsien-pei, a major Tung-hu group. After groups of Northern Huns fled westwards to the Urals and beyond in A.D. 91, the Hsien-pei conglomerate had the numerical and military strength to incorporate some 500,000 or 600,000 Huns stranded on the steppe and also to absorb large numbers of their ethnic kin, the Wu-huan people previously subjugated by the Huns (Lin 1983, 152–53; Ma 1962a, 27). In A.D. 258, when the To-pa Hsien-pei subnation began to become powerful, it boasted of “more than two hundred thousand horse-riding archers.” In 308 the whole Hsien-pei conglomerate had more than 400,000 archers, which means an aggregate population of 2 million [*Wei Shu*, chap. 1, *passim*]. It is my conjecture that during this century of serious decimation of the Chinese population and of intense intermingling of peoples in North China, the ratio of major non-Chinese ethnic groups to the Northern Chinese might have been as high as one to five.

After the To-pa Hsien-pei founded the Northern Wei dynasty in 386 and reunified all North China thirty years later, peace in general prevailed. The various non-Chinese ethnic groups, which had been uprooted from tribal living within and without the Chin empire since the beginning of the fourth century, were now scattered far and wide and mingled daily with the Chinese population. The continual deportation cumulatively involving a million Chinese peasants and craftsmen to the Northern Wei metropolitan area of Northern Shansi took place simultaneously with efforts to relocate large numbers of Hsien-pei soldiers for settled village farming. Forces of acculturation went on apace throughout the empire, while the cream of the Hsien-pei tribal army was stationed in the six northern headquarters, keeping constant vigilance against the fierce marauding Jou-jan nomads.

Contrary to the necessarily gradual process of acculturation at the bottom of the social scale, the ethnic aristocracy was susceptible to Chinese cultural influence rather early. A classic example is Chin Mi-ti (d. 86 B.C.), a captured heir-apparent to a Hsiung-nu Shan-yü (great khan), whose political and personal conduct was so profoundly influenced by Confucian moral precepts that he won contemporary recognition as a paragon of virtue; his descendants chose to die as Han loyalists rather than to serve the usurper Wang Mang [*Han-shu*, ch. 68]. Since such non-Chinese ethnic groups as the Huns, the Ti, and Ch'iang had been permitted to continue their

tribal mode of living inside China since the first century B.C., it is to be expected that in the course of time their great and lesser chiefs knew the Han Chinese language. But I am surprised to learn that practically all of the leaders of various major non-Chinese ethnic groups of the early fourth-century were not only well-versed in Chinese classics and history, but also took Chin Mi-ti as their role model. In spite of their inevitable involvement in the scramble for power which led to the rise and fall of a number of non-Chinese dominated regional states, their full acceptance of Confucian morals, norms, and of the Chinese imperial system as the only political orthodoxy indicates a considerably higher degree of sinicization than is usually expected of the "barbarians" [*Chin-shu*, ch. 101–3, *passim*].

Although the dynasty-founding To-pa group was less sinicized than the two other Hsien-pei subnations, they also had to follow the logic of the time: to shift a largely nomadic economy to the Chinese type of sedentary agriculture and to adopt by increasing measure the Chinese imperial system and bureaucracy for better management of the majority Chinese subjects. Besides, culturally and institutionally sinicization would serve as a common denominator with which to homogenize the polyethnic subject population. For all these reasons, the Hsiao-wen emperor from 494 onwards embarked upon a policy of systematic sinicization, which consisted of such measures as the moving of the capital from northern Shansi to Loyang, which was the heart of the agricultural zone, the prohibition of Hsien-pei language, the use of Chinese as the *lingua franca*, the change of polysyllabic Hsien-pei surnames into monosyllabic Chinese ones, the abandonment of Hsien-pei costumes for Chinese-style attires, and the full-scale adoption of Chinese rituals and legal code. By forcing the Hsien-pei aristocracy to take up permanent residence in the new metropolitan Loyang area and by encouraging their intermarriage with Chinese noble houses, he succeeded in forging a close bond between the biethnic ruling class. All these were parts of long-range planning for a military conquest of the southern Chinese dynasty—the only way to gain legitimacy to supreme rulership of the entire China world.

Emperor Hsiao-wen did not live to see the realization of his ultimate goal. On the contrary, full-scale sinicization in the Loyang area made the Northern Wei court, aristocracy, and officialdom increasingly extravagant and effete. The subsequent negligence and degradation of the Hsien-pei rank and file at the six northern garrison headquarters precipitated a strong nativist revolt that lasted ten years and finally brought down the Northern Wei dynasty in 534. North China was politically divided into an eastern and a western state until the former was annexed by the latter in 577.

Initially, both the eastern and western states had to vie with each other in attracting the broken-up units of the northern garrison forces. While the east remained strongly nativist and prejudiced against the majority Chinese population, the west carried out a policy of appeasing the nativist sentiments of the traditional Hsien-pei elements, on the one hand, and of generating a sense of Hsien-pei-Chinese solidarity, on the other. At the bottom, the "privilege" of military service was extended to propertied Chinese farmers, the backbone of the newly created Chinese *fu-ping* army, so as to broaden the social and ethnic base of armed forces. At the top, the policy of power-sharing and intermarriage between the Hsien-pei and Chinese aristocracy was so successful that it was precisely this so-called Kuan-Lung (Shensi-Kansu) bloc that finally reunified all China and founded the Sui-T'ang multiethnic empires.

The greatest political and military genius produced by this northwestern biethnic bloc was Li Shih-min (597–649), the second ruler but the real founder of the T'ang dynasty. Since his grandmother and mother were Hsien-pei, he was genetically 75 percent Hsien-pei, though legitimately Chinese. It was from this multiethnic cultural

milieu that he acquired a profound understanding of the traits and customs of the most powerful of the steppe peoples, the Turks under the Great Khan Hsieh-li. From various historical sources it can now be ascertained that as early as 617–18 he had already entered a sworn brotherhood with Tu-li, the second-ranking great khan and nephew and adopted son of Hsieh-li. I suspect he was able to speak Turkish because in the fall of 624 when Hsieh-li and his troops reached the north bank of the Wei River near the capital city of Ch'ang-an, he determinedly left his forces behind and rode alone without any escort to confront Hsien-li from south of the river, reproaching the latter for failure to observe the spirit of a previous oath. Then he dispatched someone to remind Tu-li not to forget the bond of “sworn brotherhood (*hsiang-buo-meng*).”³ This and many later accounts show that T'ang T'ai-Tsung was truly unique because the Turks and various steppe peoples genuinely believed that he was “one of them.”

The most eloquent testimonial to the polyglot and multiethnic character of the T'ang empire was the assumption by T'ang T'ai-tsung of a second and entirely novel imperial title of “Heavenly Khan,” upon the requests of vanquished Turkish khans and rulers of various other steppe tribal states and ethnic groups in the year 630, shortly after he had crushed the Eastern Turkish empire. An event of no less significance was the acceptance by T'ang T'ai-tsung in the early spring of 647, after a great deal of feasting and merry-making, of a plea jointly made by all attending tribal chieftains that a road be opened up between the northerly Uighurs and the southerly Turks, and be named the “Road to facilitate [various vassal peoples of the steppe] to make obeisance to their ‘Heavenly Khan (*T's'an t'ien-k'o-han tao*)’” [*Tzu-chih-t'ung-chien*, T'ang Chi, 198, 114]. From abundant T'ang records, there can be little doubt that this and many similar requests and gestures from the steppe peoples were spontaneous and sincere.

We can catch glimpses of the grandeur of the T'ang multiethnic empire from the top of the mausoleum of Emperor Kao-tsung (650–83) and Empress Wu (684–704): halfway down the hill there stand at attention two symmetrically arranged groups of stone statues, each representing the head or envoy of one of the sixty-four vassal states that stretch 3,000 miles from Korea across the Eurasian steppe to the state of Tokhara, southeast of the Aral Sea. The rare sense of mutual belonging between T'ang T'ai-tsung and his multiethnic vassals and ministers can be detected from the ground plan of his own mausoleum, which was made in 636, thirteen years before his death: the mausoleum to be guarded in the north by statues representing fourteen of his loyal Turkish and other ethnic vassals and appended in the south by a very large cemetery consisting of tombs of some members of the imperial lineage, meritorious Chinese, and non-Chinese officials and generals.

For a proper historical perspective, one should search deeper into the significance of the system of “Heavenly Khan.” Rawski, relying entirely on Pamela Crossley, contends that the origin of the “Khan of Khans” must be sought in Chinggis Khan and that “the ‘Khan of Khans’ was not a Chinese emperor” (Rawski 1996, 835). As is shown above, the archetypal Khan of Khans was the T'ang emperor T'ai-tsung's “Heavenly Khanate.” E. G. Pulleyblank explains it best: “It established a separate basis of legitimacy for his rule beyond the Great Wall, with its roots in nomad conditions, and was not simply an extension of universalist claims by a Chinese Son

³This is most clear in the narrative recorded in *T'ung Tien*, 197, 1069; Ch'en Yin- k'o 1952, suggests the year in which the sworn brotherhood formality took place in accordance with Turkish customs.

of Heaven. Moreover, it had as its corollary the assumption, quite contrary to Chinese traditional attitudes, of the equality of barbarian and Chinese as subjects. This was a point of view consciously maintained and expressed by T'ai-tsung" (Pulleyblank 1976, 38). Needless to say, T'ang T'ai-tsung's legitimacy as the Chinese emperor was never questioned, while later "Khan of Khans" such as Khubilai or Ch'ien-lung, being "resident alien" in China, had to devise various political, institutional, cultural, and ideological means to legitimize their rulership in China. On the other hand, while later Tibetan Lamaist Buddhism could make Khubilai or Ch'ien-lung "God" incarnate (Franke 1978, esp. 77–79), T'ang T'ai-tsung's Heavenly Khanate was a secular institution, though not devoid of cosmological meaning.

During the entire T'ang period there were altogether 369 "prime ministers" from 98 surname groups. Those of non-Chinese ethnic origins account for 9 percent of the total but constitute 17.4 percent of the aggregate of surnames—a record unsurpassed by any "Chinese" dynasty. No less unique in Chinese history is the fact that the various steppe ethnic groups, such as the Turks, Sogdians, and other Central Asians; the Khitans, Hsi, Koreans; and toward late T'ang the Sha-t'o Turks, consistently dominated the T'ang polyethnic army.

Other statistics, facts, and facets relevant to the study of sinicization up to and including T'ang times are either illuminating or self-explanatory.

The author of the phonetic dictionary *Ch'ieh-yün*, Lu Fa-yen, who completed this landmark work late in the sixth century, was a member of an aristocratic Hsien-pei family. China's greatest romantic poet, Li Po (? 705–62), was brought to Szechwan in his early boyhood by his Central Asian merchant father. More revealingly, the three lifelong friends and leading poets of late T'ang were all of non-Chinese ethnic origins: Po Chü-i (772–846), Yüan Chen (779–831), and Liu Yü-hsi (772–842) were respectively of Central Asian, Hsien-pei, and Hun (Hsiung-nu) descent. During Sui and early T'ang, the great architect Yü-wen K'ai was of mixed Hsiung-nu and Hsien-pei descent. His contemporary, the architect Ho Ch'ou, who was commissioned to do the initial planning for the metropolitan Ch'ang-an (Ta-hsing in Sui times) area, was the grandson of a Sogdian merchant from Central Asia. Mi Fu (1051–1107), a great calligrapher and father of the splash-ink school of landscape painting, is very likely to have been of Sogdian descent too (Yao 1962, *passim*).

Not to be completely overshadowed by the north, the south that had remained Chinese throughout the pre-Tang centuries also produced its own share of preeminent persons. The aboriginal Hsi people of modern Kiangsi area could take pride in producing China's foremost pastoral poet T'ao Ch'ien (365–427), better known by the name T'ao Yüan-ming. The aboriginal people of modern northern Hunan had the honor of producing Ou-yang Hsün (557–645), one of the most famous T'ang calligraphers. If a dozen or so of these southern ethnic groups were pushed increasingly into the hills and mountains of inland Yangtze as the Chinese immigrants advanced, significant numbers of these aborigines had their compensation by becoming the backbone of the southern army, especially because the carpet-bagging Chinese ruling class was too effete and self-indulgent to lead the ranks. One of the stout ethnic generals who saved the nascent Eastern Chin dynasty from military collapse was T'ao K'an (259–334), great-grandfather of T'ao Yuan-ming.

A different kind of acculturation took place in the heavily garrisoned northern border areas. It is beyond the scope of this essay to outline the evolution of the T'ang army system. Suffice it here to point out that, with the impending collapse of the Chinese peasant army (*fu-ping*) system and its inevitable replacement by a professional polyglot mercenary army, soon after 700 there was the need to merge several normal

provinces into one large military region for better coordination and efficiency. In order to check the power of the newly instituted military governors, the T'ang court finally decided to fill such posts only with non-Chinese ethnics of humble social origin on the theory that such men did not have political ambition. Consequently, in 742 An Lu-shan (d. 757), a Sogdian fluent in six steppe languages and dialects who was also a courtier, emerged as the most powerful of the northern military governors, with much of modern Hopei and southern Manchuria under his command. Although the great rebellion (755–62) he launched ended in failure, the T'ang court could never regain effective control of the northeastern provinces, which remained in the hands of virtually "hereditary" warlords, mostly of non-Chinese origins. The extent to which people of this northeastern region had undergone the process of "barbarization" may be reflected in the fact that henceforth they identified themselves more with the memories of An Lu-shan and his warlord successors than with later T'ang emperors (Ch'en [1942]; 1997, I:179–200). Defying the national trend that literary attainments procured more and more social prestige, people in this northeastern region still valued such qualities as physical prowess and personal valor that make up good soldiery.

There was also another kind of "barbarization" that may be more correctly described as "Central-Asianization" or "Western-Asianization." Throughout the period 600–900 there was the continual introduction of Central and Western Asian music; dance; magic; acrobatics; polo; Turkish and other ethnic costumes; various exotic foods including grape wines, refined granular cane sugar, many types of pancakes and pastry; and certain nomad ways of cooking meats. In early T'ang it was fashionable to learn to speak and to act Turkish. The best-known case was the ill-starred first heir apparent of T'ai-tsung, prince Ch'eng-ch'ien.

In the realm of interracial, interethnic, and interfaith dealings, the open-mindedness and large-heartedness of the early T'ang Chinese are nowhere better shown than in the words of T'ang T'ai-tsung, who, after receiving the Nestorian monk O Lo Pen in 635, expressed his opinion on religions in general, including Nestorian Christianity:

The Way has more than one name. There is more than one Sage. Doctrines vary in different lands, their benefits reach all mankind. O Lo Pen, a man of great virtue from Ta Ts'in (the Roman Empire) has brought his images and books from afar to present them in our capital. After examining his doctrines we find them profound and pacific. After studying his principles we find that they stress what is good and important. His teaching is not diffuse and his reasoning is sound. This religion does good to all men. Let it be preached freely in Our Empire.

(Fitzgerald 1935, 336)

Although the specific circumstances of their introduction were not clearly recorded, Zoroastrianism and Manichaeism were equally welcomed into T'ang China. It may indeed be said that the spirit of tolerance and of cosmopolitanism exhibited by T'ang Chinese is almost the exact opposite to "Han chauvinism," arrogance, and xenophobia, which some students of Chinese history believe to have characterized the so-called "sinicization."

Broadly speaking, whether at the spiritual and philosophical level or at the mundane everyday level, the T'ang court and society at large seem to have well understood the futility of forced assimilation and the wisdom of "laissez-faire" in the sense of letting all ethnic and religious groups play themselves out in the same melting pot. The "final" outcome would be something that may be called "sinicization." Biologically and culturally, the almost complete absence of reference to such ethnic

terms as Hsiung-nu, Wu-huan, and Hsien-pei, seems to indicate that they had long become “sinicized” or absorbed into the enlarged Chinese nation. Religiously and philosophically, a similar phenomenon is found in the case of Buddhism. Its pre-T’ang phase is nowhere more aptly described than by the title of Eric Zürcher’s standard treatise, *The Buddhist Conquest of China: The Spread and Adaptation of Buddhism in Early Medieval China* (1959). As a result of centuries of adaptation to the Chinese milieu, Indian Buddhism finally became thoroughly “sinicized” in T’ang times, as may be evidenced by the maturation of such typically “Chinese” schools of Buddhism as the T’ien-t’ai, the Hua-yen, the Pure Land, and especially the Ch’an (Zen).

Before concluding the section on the T’ang, I would like to examine some available figures. Between T’ang T’ai-tsung’s accession in 617 and the outbreak of the An Lu-shan rebellion in 755, a span of 138 years, the aggregate number of such steppe people as the Turks and the nineteen Turkish T’ieh-le tribes, the Koreans, the T’u-fan Tibetans, the Tang-hsiang Tibetans (the Tanguts), and Central and Western Asians who were captured by the T’ang army or voluntarily submitted to the T’ang and were hence settled within China amounted to at least 1.7 million (Fu 1992, 257). This total does not, of course, include those alien ethnics who chose to reside in China through normal channels, nor does it include those alien ethnics who took up permanent residence in China in the late eighth and ninth centuries. Thousands of Uighurs served in the T’ang army as mercenaries. After having helped the T’ang court to crush the An Lu-shan rebellion, many Uighurs became merchants and usurers. The number of Uighurs who eventually settled in Ch’ang-an and other cities of China is impossible to estimate. There were Persians in Ch’ang-an and Yang-chou by the thousands. A very large Arab population resided in Kuang-chou (Canton) in late T’ang. C. P. Fitzgerald summarizes thus: “the Arab and other foreign communities resident in the port were very large. . . . Abu Zaid, an Arab traveler who was in China towards the end of the T’ang period, relates that when Canton was taken by storm by the rebel Huang Tsao in A.D. 879, 120,000 foreigners, Arabs, Jews, Zoroastrians and Christians, were massacred, as well as native population of the city” (Fitzgerald 1935, 334). The kind of true metropolitanism that characterized the life, outlook, and attitude of the T’ang Chinese is almost unique in world history, paralleled perhaps only by the Roman Empire from Hadrian to Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 117–80).

In regard to early T’ang’s basic principle in handling interethnic affairs, certain Western scholars hold views more critical than what has been presented in this section. Let us analyze what is the actual meaning of the much-quoted Turkish inscription of Kocho-Tsaidam, which H. J. Wechsler thinks “eloquently relates the fate suffered by the conquered Turks.”

The sons of the Turkish nobles became slaves to the Chinese people, and their innocent daughters were reduced to serfdom. The nobles, discarding their Turkish titles, accepted those of China, and made submission to the Chinese Qaghan, devoting their labour and their strength for fifty years. For him, both toward the rising sun and westward to the Iron Gates, they launched their expeditions. But to the Chinese Qaghan they surrendered their empire and their institutions.

(Cited and commented on in Wechsler 1979, 223)

I have read six other Turkish inscriptions available in Chinese translation (Lin 1988, 241–86), but the passage quoted above should enable us to get at the truth. When we realize that this inscription represents basically the nomad’s nostalgia about the “freedom” of his mode of life on the vast expanse of the Eurasian steppe with the blessing of the lord of the boundless blue sky (*Tengri*), then such expressions as “slaves”

and “serfdom” are merely metaphorical. What the inscription says about “the nobles, discarding their Turkish titles,” accepting “those of China” is true because these Turkish nobles did receive at least comparable ranks and ample material rewards from the “Heavenly Khan.”

What is more important is the fact that T'ang T'ai-tsung's success in playing the game of divide and rule was primarily due to great-khan Hsieh-li's cruelty and tyranny to his own people and also accidentally to unusually severe snowstorms that hit the steppe in the winter of 629–30. To do justice to T'ang T'ai-tsung, he prevailed over conservative opinion and decided to resettle some one hundred thousand surrendered Turks in the Ordos area without changing their tribal mode of living and commissioned more than a hundred Turkish nobles as officers of higher and middle ranks, several as generals. It was said that in the year 630 the total of Turkish officers at the T'ang court almost matched that of similarly ranked Chinese civil officials. Consequently, before long nearly ten thousand households of Turks came to reside in the metropolitan Ch'ang-an area (*Tzu-chih t'ung-chien*, “T'ang-chi,” ch. 193, p. 907).

In the spring of 630 when the great khan Hsieh-li was brought to T'ang T'ai-tsung as a war captive, the emperor, after reprimanding him for his acts of atrocity, not only spared his life but ordered that he be well taken care of by the director of the bureau of imperial stud horses for the remainder of his life. In 658, the Turkish general A-shih-na Ho-lu, having turned traitor in plotting the great Turkish rebellion, was captured and offered to be executed at T'ang T'ai-tsung's mausoleum as a redemption for his ingratitude; the emperor Kao-tsung was so moved that he spared Ho-lu's life and later decided to bury him beside the grave of his original supreme ruler, Hsieh-li great khan (Lin 1988, 115). These anecdotes and many others go far to testify to the fact that early T'ang rulers treated alien subjects fairly, without discrimination but with feeling. As pointed out above, such genuine feeling for alien subjects found its expression even in the design of T'ang T'ai-tsung's mausoleum.

By way of summing up, the Han period initiated the policy of letting large non-Chinese ethnic groups live along and within the northern and northwestern boundaries of the empire, a policy which in the long run familiarized them with the Chinese mode of sedentary rural life. It also brought about a surprisingly high degree of sinicization, at least in terms of knowledge of Chinese classics and history and acceptance of Confucian values and norms, of members of the ethnic aristocracy—a factor which might have mitigated the cultural shock of the Chinese during the fourth century A.D., when interethnic mingling and blending was intense and persistent amidst severe decimation of Chinese population. This century and the following fifth and sixth centuries A.D. seem to constitute a special chapter in which the blending of various streams of ethnicity in the bodies of the “Chinese” of entire North China may have reached an extent never equaled in subsequent Chinese history.

While the ratio of non-Chinese ethnics to the entire Chinese population at the height of T'ang prosperity in the early eighth century may not be as high as that during the fourth century, the acculturation between the various ethnic and religious groups and the Chinese went on at an accelerated pace because of the peace in the Eurasian steppe ensured by the system of Heavenly Khan and of the prevailing spirit of cosmopolitanism in the nation at large. Instead of reasserting the superiority of the Chinese political and cultural tradition as a force of forced assimilation of the aliens, the T'ang Chinese watched with amusement the adoption of certain steppe ways and customs by the playful aristocrats and commoners. They resigned themselves to the fate of “barbarization” of the northeast after the An Lu-shan rebellion, but welcomed with open arms the introduction of Central and Western Asian music, dance, food,

drinks, and games as well as ancient and rising religions. It is through T'ang China's attitude toward religions we can best understand that it is the open-mindedness and large-heartedness that account substantially for sinicization's innate strength.

If regarded as an orbit under direct and indirect Chinese cultural and institutional influence, the greater China world remained divided for more than half a millennium, from the outbreak of the An Lu-shan rebellion in 755 to Khubilai Khan's conquest of the Southern Sung in 1279 (Han 1986, II: Foreword). Viewed from the standpoint of interethnic contest for power during the millennium since the inception of the Northern Sung in 960, the Chinese were distinctly in a disadvantageous position: witness the long-lasting Khitan Liao (916–1125) and the Jurchen Chin (1115–1234) dynasties of conquest in the north, the enduring border state of the Tangut Hsia (1038–1227) in the northwest, and especially the conquest of the whole of the China world first by the Mongol Yüan (1260–1368) and then by the Manchu Ch'ing (1644–1911).

As compared to the T'ang and pre-T'ang phase, the number of dominant ethnic groups and of effective alien regimes and border states of the post-960 period seems to have been reduced to a neater and simpler pattern more easily grasped by modern students. But decades of specialized research by Chinese, Japanese, and Western scholars have shown that the emergence of the above-mentioned border regimes and vast empires actually represented the "crystalization" of long and complex processes, including the break-up, absorption, regrouping, and merging of various ethnic groups within their respective regions, groups whose roots go deep into Chinese history. For example, among the peoples the Khitan Liao conquered and incorporated into its conglomerate were the Hsi, the Shih-wei proto-Mongols, and especially the Po-hai (Parhae), who formed a highly sinicized state in southeastern Manchuria (714–926). The regime of Hsia, with its territorial base in Kansu, Ordos, and northern Shensi, all within the boundaries of the T'ang and Sung empires, was a perfect outcome of centuries of acculturation between the Tanguts, Chinese, Uighurs, and the T'u-fan Tibetans; its rulers had been bestowed the T'ang imperial surname of Li and also the Sung imperial surname of Chao. As to the Khitans themselves, they began to get involved in the greater China world from the fourth century onwards; and, while harassing the northeastern border of early T'ang, they also served loyally and ably in the T'ang army. Indeed, the Khitan general Li Kuang-pi earned his imperially bestowed surname because of his important contribution to the putting-down of the An Lu-shan rebellion. It is clear, therefore, that none of these regimes was founded by "barbarians."

The post-960 period as a whole should be regarded as one of alien military ascendancy, but also one of profound demographic changes in favor of the Chinese. Recently, ruminating over a passage in an essay by the Northern Sung statesman and historian Ou-yang Hsiu (1007–72), which was part of my preteen required reading, I became more aware than ever of the probable causal relationship between the unbroken domestic peace and the unprecedented population growth that characterized the period from the inception of the Sung to Ou-yang Hsiu's lifetime.⁴ In fact, as to

⁴The essay is "Feng-lo-t'ing chi," written by Ou-yang Hsiu in 1046 or 1047 when he was prefect of Ch'u-chou in Anhwei. It is my comfort to learn that concerning the populations of Sung, Liao, and Chin the views of the contributors to Vol. 6 of *The Cambridge History of China* and mine almost entirely agree. My systematic studies of the effects of early-ripening rice and of various American food plants on the long-range food production and land utilization in China during the past millennium should help to deepen our understanding of one of the most basic factors that made unprecedented population growth possible. See the bibliography for detailed references to my articles.

the relative importance of economic and institutional factors bearing on the sustained growth of a preindustrial population, a brief comparison between early Sung and early Ch'ing is overdue. Actually, domestic peace under Northern Sung (960–1125) lasted nearly half a century longer than that of early Ch'ing (1679–1796), in which the Ch'ing population more than doubled itself and reached the unprecedented magnitude of 300 million. Offhand, I can only say that the one distinctively favorable factor the early Ch'ing Chinese enjoyed, as compared to their Northern Sung counterpart, was a series of fiscal reforms, all aimed at benefitting the poor segments of the population, including the permanent abolition of the *corvée* and the merging of the adult *ting* payment into the land tax. Recent reflections seem to reaffirm the conclusion I reached a quarter of a century ago that the population near the end of Northern Sung must have reached 100 million. The combined population of Southern Sung and Jurchen Chin empire in the north before the Mongol onslaught must have considerably exceeded 100 million. Although the factors relating to the Mongol wars of conquest of north and south China and to the sustained lower level of registered population under a century of Mongol rule are not fully understood, there can be little doubt that in the interethnic contest for power during the last millennium the military weakness of the Chinese seems to have been more than compensated for by their vast numerical superiority.

During the post-960 period two major novel factors merit our attention. 1. Although the T'u-fan Tibetans and the peoples of the Nan-chao state in modern Yunnan participated in the interethnic contest for power in T'ang times, they did not become parts of the greater China world until Khubilai's military conquest of the extreme southwest in the early 1250s. 2. After Khubilai's accession to the great khanate in 1260, he began to build a symbiotic relationship with Tibetan Lamaist Buddhism. He acted as the patron-protector of Tibetan Buddhism; in return, Lamaism contributed a new dimension to Khubilai's claim of legitimacy in his vast polyethnic empire, namely, his being identified with Mañjusri, the Buddhisattva of Wisdom, and with the Universal Emperor (Sanskrit: *Cakravartin*) (Franke 1978, esp. 77–79; Rossabi 1993, 460). In addition, Tibetan Buddhism began to play a vital role in the long-range stabilization and governance of Tibet and also to appear among the Mongols. The early Manchu rulers, both before and after the conquest of China in 1644, fully understood the importance of Tibetan Buddhism as an instrument with which to build up and to help govern their vast multiethnic empire.

Before we examine the outcome of various subphases of sinicization during the post-960 period, I shall mention in passing that the Chinese nation during the Sung, especially during the southern Sung, seemed to have turned inward psychically. Prolonged military menace and humiliation by the Khitans, Tanguts, and Jurchens made the elite as well as the commoners increasingly sinocentric and somewhat xenophobic. The lustful and joyous cosmopolitanism of the early T'ang was gone forever.

In examining the outcome of sinicization during the subphase from 960 to the Mongol conquest of all China in 1279, we are very fortunate in having Herbert Franke's profound concluding remarks on the Jurchen Chin dynasty, which I have cited earlier. Though confined to the Chin, his remarks actually apply to a lesser extent to the Khitan Liao and the Tangut Hsia empires as well. From his conclusion on the Chin we learn that for the first time in the history of the greater China world the multiethnic intellectual elite of a defunct "alien" dynasty solemnly imposed upon itself the moral obligation of serving as the standard-bearer of Chinese orthodoxy under the most predatory of the dynasties of conquest, the Mongol Yüan. Nothing

indicates better the Jurchen elite's complete transformation into "Chinese" than this deeply moving fact: its tragic fate under the hooves of Mongol horses gave the leading Chinese literary figure, Yüan Hao-wen (1190–1257), the resolve to chronicle the literary achievements of his fallen dynasty in his *Chung-chou chi* (*An Anthology of the Central Plain*) and other works that are vital sources for the reconstruction of late Chin history. Be it specially noted here that Yüan, who dedicated so much of his productive life to salvaging many of the Sino-Jurchen literary elite from oblivion, was himself descended from the once "barbaric" To-pa Wei imperial lineage.

Information on the sinicization of Jurchen commoners is scanty, but there are valuable clues. 1. From 1145 onward, an increasing number of Jurchen army units (*meng-an mo-k'o*) began to carry out military colonization in the interior of north China and to intermingle constantly with the Chinese population (Ho 1970, 36). 2. From the inception of the Chin dynasty, rules and regulations relating to intermarriage between the Jurchen and Chinese were nebulous. Although emperor Shih-tsung (1161–89) is known for his nativist movement, including his half-hearted attempts to segregate *meng-an mo-k'o* rank and file from Chinese villagers, there was no explicit prohibition of Jurchen-Chinese intermarriage. On the contrary, in late spring 1191 the cabinet memorialized to the throne that "the Chinese tax-paying peasants and the [Jurchen] military colonizers are sometimes not friendly toward each other; to encourage them to intermarry would contribute much to the long-term stabilization of our state" (cited in T'ao 1971, 85 n. 6). Consequently, emperor Chang-tsung approved this proposal, thus removing any apprehension about interethnic marriage, which must have taken place unobtrusively since rather early in the dynasty. 3. Since even against overwhelming odds Jurchen forces refused to surrender, the Mongols naturally took Jurchens as their primary target for slaughter. This Mongol cruelty made it necessary for Jurchen soldiers and civilians to use every conceivable means to appear in the guise of Chinese, including the change to Chinese names and attires. In other words, by the time the whole Chin empire fell to the Mongols, "complete" sinicization became the Jurchens' necessary means for survival (T'ao 1970, 84, 86 n. 14). 4. Perhaps the best general index of the complete or near-complete sinicization of the Jurchens is the Mongol Yüan's broad socioethnic stratificational system, in which the third category "Han jen" (Chinese) includes those Chinese north of the Huai river originally within the orbit of the Chin empire, those inhabitants of Szechwan and Yunnan conquered by Khubilai years before he conquered, among others, the Southern Sung, Khitans, Jurchens, Koreans, and Po-hai (Han 1986, II:54).

The Mongols of Chinggis Khan and his descendants succeeded in creating the largest empire in human history. With their nomadic and predatory mode of life, shamanistic beliefs, and relatively primitive culture, the Mongols welcomed practically every cultural import. In a sense, Mongol China's "cosmopolitanism" is comparable to that of T'ang China except that it functioned largely as a one-way street—merely as a conduit to receive and to adapt. It is well known that of all alien conquering aristocracies the Mongol ruling elite was the least susceptible to the Chinese way of life, except for the necessity of adopting the traditional Chinese imperial ideology and bureaucracy to govern the Chinese who, at the time of Mongol conquest, easily outnumbered their conquerors more than one hundred to one.

Fortunately for our purpose, a mine of information about elite sinicization in Yüan times can be found in the modern classic by Ch'en Yüan (1880–1971), which is available in English translation under the title *Western and Central Asians in China under the Mongols: Their Transformation into Chinese* (1966; Chinese original, 1935). Thanks to the quantity and variety of Yüan literary works extant and especially to

Table 1 Non-Natives of Chen-chiang, 1330–1332

	Household	Mouth	Single	Grand Total
Total	3,845	10,555	2,948	13,503
Mongol	29	163	429	592
Uighur	14	93	107	200
Hui-hui (Moslims)	59	374	310	684
Yeh-li-k'o-wen	23	106	109	215
Ho-hsi	3	35	19	54
Khitans	21	116	75	691
Jurchen	25	261	224	485
Han Chinese	3,671	9,407	1,675	11,082

Source: *Chih-shun Cheng-chiang chih* cited in Lo 1966, 178–79; supplemented by Han 1986, 5.

Ch'en's rare erudition, we have reliable and sometimes vivid and detailed information on as many as 132 Western and Central Asians of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries who excelled in literature and fine arts or otherwise contributed meaningfully to discourses on Confucian, Buddhist, and Taoist philosophies and religions, and also on various ancient classics on rites. Not a few of these Muslims and Nestorian Christians gave up their original faiths and adopted the Confucian way of life, including the observance of the three-year mourning period. Sometimes their womenfolk, too, received a good Confucian education, including a large dosage of the Ch'eng-Chu Neo-Confucian precept for women: "Starvation to death is a trivial matter but the loss of physical chastity is a matter of utmost seriousness." During the wars and turmoil attending the fall of the Yüan dynasty some of these highly sinicized women chose the Ch'eng-Chu style of martyrdom.

According to Yüan government regulations, all the Western and Central Asians belonged to the *se-mu* group, that is, all those from the far western regions who were not Mongols, Chinese, Jurchens, Khitans, or the like. As to the ethnic origins of the 132 *se-mu* individuals studied by Ch'en Yüan, 23 were lumped together as Hsi-yü (western regions), and 8 were called Yeh-li-k'o-wen (Erke'un, Nestorian Christians) without specification. With the exception of 8 Tanguts, 2 Naimans, and 2 Arabs (Ta-shih), the rest all appear to be Turks, with at least 68 Uighurs under several subdesignations. The cultural predominance of the Uighurs among the *se-mu* group is quite congruent with the known fact that they played a very important role in the Yüan government both at the central and the provincial levels.

It was not long before some *se-mu* elite generated a genuine admiration for Chinese culture, but that is not likely to have been true of all of them, let alone the "many thousands of Turks [and other *se-mu*] in various walks of life: soldiers, tradesmen, couriers, clerks and scribes, interpreters, teachers, minor officials and scholars, craftsmen, monks, and adventurers" who have left no records (de Rachewiltz 1983, 293). The unusual population register showing ethnic composition in the 1330–32 edition of the history of the Chen-chiang prefecture, about 75 kilometers east of Nanking, may yield some clue (see table 1).

All categories of non-Chinese immigrants (*ch'iao-yü*) account for 17.93 percent of the "transients," a percentage which certainly is not insignificant. But when we set it against the total number of permanent resident households (100,065) of the entire

prefecture—which would indicate a total population in the neighborhood of half a million—then the 2,411 non-Chinese transients, representing but one-half of 1 percent of the prefectural population, was truly a drop in the bucket. Although the ratio of Mongol and *se-mu* might be considerably higher in the national and provincial capitals and military garrison headquarters, the vast rural hinterland was not likely to see many aliens. It seems reasonable to generalize that the overwhelming numerical superiority of the Chinese was a most elemental biological factor that ensured the long-range sinicization of their alien conquerors, multiethnic ruling class, and people of various walks of life.

We are, however, cautioned by the Mongologist Henry Serruys, who has patiently explained that the sinicization of nonelite aliens and especially of the Mongols is likely to have been a much slower process than is usually presumed. Although cases in which Mongols in Yüan times adopted Chinese names and in which Mongol commoners were sold as slaves at home and abroad are known (Meng 1938, 96), Serruys is certainly right in saying that the real sinicization of the Mongols began only with the Ming dynasty. “They were,” he says, “far too few in number to resist indefinitely the influence of the surrounding Chinese population” (Serruys 1959, 163). A factor which may or may not have helped much to accelerate the sinicization of the Mongols and *se-mu* in Ming times was the 1391 interethnic marriage law:

Every Mongol and *se-mu* is allowed to marry a Chinese [in small print: “provided both are willing”]. They are not allowed to marry their own kind. Those violating [this regulation] shall be punished with a bastinado of eighty blows and both male and female shall become state slaves.

(*Ming-lü chi-chieh fu-li*, 1908 reprint, ch. 6, 36a–36b)

In theory, this law should have quickened the tempo of sinicization through legally forced intermarriage between aliens and Chinese. But in practice we have found cases of successful evasion and of changing alien names into Chinese so as to make intraethnic marriage appear legal. We should mention in passing, too, certain early-Ming revanchist measures—which are preserved only in private literary works and genealogies—such as prohibiting the descendants of those alien traitors of Sung during the Mongol conquest from taking civil-service examinations, but which often could not be enforced effectively (Lo 1959, 52–53).

We have now arrived at the point of whether the Ch’ing as a dynasty of conquest did or did not owe its success to a policy of systematic sinicization and whether, in assessing the significance of the Ch’ing in Chinese history, the so-called new trend that rejects the sinicization thesis is intellectually valid. Let me, therefore, resubmit to rigorous scholarly examination the gist of what I said thirty years ago about Ch’ing sinicization:

Systematic sinicization of the Manchu imperial clan, nobility, and officials may be evidenced by the following facts: the adoption from the beginning of the dynasty of the Ming government system *in toto*, which, with a few Manchu innovations, was improved and rationalized; the ardent endorsement by the K’ang-hsi emperor and his successors of the conservative and passive aspects of social and political relationships in later Sung Neo-Confucianism as official orthodoxy; the unprecedented homage that the Ch’ing emperors paid to Confucius (two kneelings and six prostrations in Peking and three kneelings and nine prostrations in Confucius’ birthplace, Ch’ü-fu); the designing and maintaining of the strictest education for imperial princes in Chinese history based largely on orthodox Confucianism; the utilization of Confucian orthodoxy as a justification for abolishing the various layers

of feudal relationships within the indigenous Manchu Eight Banner system; the large-scale printing and dissemination under imperial auspices of ancient classics and Neo-Confucian writings of the Ch'eng-Chu school and literary reference tools and anthologies which culminated in the compilation of the *ssu-k-u ch'üan'shu*; and the increasing addiction to Chinese literature, calligraphy, painting, and entertainments.

It is true that such unusually able rulers as K'ang-hsi, Yung-cheng, and Ch'ien-lung did not fail to realize the importance of preserving certain Manchu traits and customs. But so effective was the crucible of Chinese culture that by the latter half of the eighteenth century the imperially exhorted Manchu nativism had boiled down to little more than a legal obligation on the part of imperial princes and Manchu examination candidates to practice horsemanship and archery and to study the Manchu language, although Manchu Shamanism seems to have survived till the end of the dynasty. There is definite evidence that even for imperial princes, Manchu had become a dead language by the beginning of the nineteenth century at the latest. . . . In fact, so sinicized were the Manchus that much of what we regard as the orthodox Confucian state and society is exemplified not by earlier Chinese dynasties, but the Ch'ing period. When the supreme test came in 1851 with the outbreak of the Taiping rebellion, the majority of the Chinese nation, especially the key social class of scholars and officials, fought loyally for their Manchu masters because the so-called alien dynasty had been, in fact, more Confucian than previous Chinese dynasties.

(Ho 1967, 192–93)

While I am reasonably confident that these aspects of Ch'ing sinicization I brought up a full generation ago have by and large stood the test of time, the required brevity of my 1967 essay calls for some amplification. The first major point I would like to amplify is what appears to me to have been the consistent if unwritten ancestral injunction since the time of the dynastic founder Nurhaci (1559–1626) that it was vital for imperial princes to work hard on Chinese literature and history so that at the very least they duly understood the basic factors accounting for the rise and fall of dynasties. Very unusual circumstances made the young Nurhaci conversant in three languages—Manchu, Chinese, and Mongolian—and insightful into the weakness of the corrupt Ming court.⁵ While he and his successor Huang-t'ai-chi (1592–1643) realized the wisdom of preserving Manchu nativism, they understood better that knowledge is power and the key to that power was Chinese. The creation of the Manchu script was less an indication of nativism than a means to acquire new knowledge and to raise the cultural level of all Manchus through more and more translation of Chinese classics, history, literature, and works on technology.

K'ang-hsi (r. 1662–1722) was the first Manchu emperor to plunge deeply into Chinese classics and history and, hence, the first to develop a genuine admiration for Chinese culture. He laid down the rule, which was strictly observed to the end of the dynasty, that all imperial princes undergo years of rigorously supervised instruction

⁵Still a preteen, Nurhaci already made his first contacts with Chinese and Mongols at various Ming border trade posts. Living with his maternal grandfather, a powerful Manchu chieftain who repeatedly harassed Ming border towns, Nurhaci was captured by the Ming general Li Ch'eng-liang, who executed Nurhaci's maternal grandfather but treated Nurhaci almost as an adopted son. Consequently, in a three-year period Nurhaci accompanied Li on his various official tours, including visits to Beijing. Nurhaci must have known Chinese so well that, as he later recalled, he learned the basics of military and political strategy from the famous Chinese novels, *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* and the Chinese "Robin Hood" serials, *Shui-hu Chuan*. The Manchus did not have their own script and these novels were not translated into a newly created Manchu script until nearly half a century later. There can be little doubt about Nurhaci's proficiency in Mongolian. See T'eng Shao-chen 1995, 31–37.

in Chinese. As the famous historian Chao I (1727–1814) recalled, while serving as secretary of the Grand Council between 1756 and 1761, he was so moved by the familiar sight of lantern-guided preteen princes walking to attend palace school at daybreak that he was filled with boundless admiration and stated that none of the previous dynasties had ever offered a better and stricter schooling for imperial princes than did the reigning Ch'ing dynasty. As Chao added, the young princes were allowed very few holidays a year; in fact, not many commoners would institute as rigorous and exacting a school-scheduling for their children as did the Manchu emperors. Small wonder, then, that there were men of attainments among Ch'ing rulers. Emperor Yung-cheng's (1723–35) calligraphy and lucid prose, shown partly in his famous and voluminous "rescripts in vermilion ink," won the admiration of my late teacher, Ch'en Yin-k'o (1890–1969), a leading sinologue of this century. Emperor Ch'ien-lung (1736–95) may have established a world record as the most prolific "poet," composing more than 42,000 poems in Chinese during his long life (T'ang and Lo 1996, 461).

The significance of emperor K'ang-hsi's exaltation of Confucius to unprecedented heights cannot be overestimated. Although from Former Han onwards Confucius was progressively deified and honored, the principle had always persisted that no living emperor should make the same obeisance to Confucius as his subjects did to him. To demonstrate his sincere admiration for and deep gratitude to Confucius, K'ang-hsi broke all historical precedents by performing ritual kowtows to Confucius' tablet. If this was not a ritualistic expression of the highest possible degree of "sinicization," I do not know what was. As is generally known, in the Sung manual *Hundred Surnames*, the imperial Sung surname of Chao heads the list. It is less generally known that there was a Ming manual entitled *Thousand Surnames*, in which the highest honor was given to the imperial Ming surname Chu. It is a recent revelation (*Chinese Science News, Overseas Edition* [in Chinese], 25 April 1997) that *The K'ang-hsi Imperially Compiled Hundred Surnames* designates Confucius' surname K'ung as the first and foremost. The rationale for making the Ch'ing the most Confucian of all the dynasties in Chinese history is nowhere more candidly and authoritatively explained than by emperor Yung-cheng in 1723:

Ordinary people know only that Confucius' teaching aims at differentiating human relationships, distinguishing the rights and obligations of the superior and the inferior, rectifying human minds and thoughts, and amending social customs. Do they also know that after human relationships have been differentiated, the rights and obligations of the superior and the inferior distinguished, human minds and thoughts rectified, and social customs amended the one who benefits the most [from his teachings] is the ruler himself?

(Translated and cited in Ho 1968, 14–15)

I invite all students of Ch'ing history, especially Rawski, to make a point-by-point repudiation of the above-mentioned events and rituals in the history of sinicization and also the words and deeds of the main architects of the Ch'ing empire in rationalizing the unprecedented exaltation of Confucius—the very quintessence of Siniticism.

It must also be re-stressed that the kind of Confucianism that the Ch'ing state wholeheartedly sponsored and tried to fully implement is the Ch'eng-Chu Neo-Confucianism. The late Arthur F. Wright amplified very well the point I barely touched on in my 1968 essay:

... The new Confucianism not only updated Confucian thought, it added new imperatives unknown in the more permissive and amorphous Confucianism of earlier

centuries. It is the *new* Confucianism that insists on the segregation of sexes and the complete subordination of women. It is the new Confucianism that gradually develops the concept of loyalty from what it was—a relationship ultimately determined by the conscience of the subject—into what it became—imperative to unquestioning and total subordination to any ruler, however idiotic or amoral he might be. The new Confucianism was more totalitarian in intent than the old had been, in that it gave the monarch authority to police all private as well as public morals and customs, to extirpate heresy, etc. No wonder that later emperors found in it the justification for gathering to themselves more and more of the power they formerly shared with the literati.

(Wright 1968, 39)

Starting from the early years of the K'ang-hsi reign, the government used more and more channels through which the popularized version of the Ch'eng-Chu political-moral orthodoxy was endlessly exhorted to the nation. The late Professor Meng Shen had probably the most profound understanding of the lives and emotions of the Ming loyalists of early Ch'ing times. In his opinion, when emperor K'ang-hsi gave orders that scholars of repute be recommended by provincial authorities and that a special palace examination be held for them in the spring of 1679, the hearts of even the most "determined" of the Ming loyalist candidates softened because they knew only too well by now that none of the previous Chinese rulers could have been more Confucian than this Manchu emperor (Meng Shen 1935).

It was the policy of systematic sinicization that enabled Manchu rulers to win the loyal support of the overwhelming majority of their subjects—the Han Chinese—and further to usher the whole nation into more than a full century of peace, prosperity, and population growth, which in the last analysis provided the three generations of outstanding Manchu monarchs—K'ang-hsi, Yung-cheng, and Ch'ien-lung—with all the necessary resources to construct and sustain the largest consolidated empire in Chinese history.

Realizing that consolidating the steppe was always a necessary requisite for the conquest of China, Nurhaci and Huang-t'ai-chi took full advantage of Mongol internal dissension by establishing Manchu overlordship over them years before launching a full-scale war of invasion of China. As early as 1636 a special government organ was established for supervising Mongolian affairs, which was renamed Li-Fan-Yüan, commonly known as the Colonial Court, in 1638. The policy towards the Mongols, which had begun in the 1630s and was continued and amplified throughout the post-1644 years, consisted of perennial intermarriage between the imperial clan and Mongol princedom, periodic conferring of noble ranks on various strata of the Mongol ruling class, and the setting up of mutually "segregated" basic administrative units known as *khoshuns* (banners), ruled by hereditary banner princes. The time-honored *aimaks*, or tribal domains, remained in name only, for they were transformed by the Manchu court into leagues (*chighulghan*), which met every three years but possessed little real authority beyond regulating inter-banner disputes. Six leagues were in Inner Mongolia and four leagues were in Outer Mongolia. Other adjacent and strategic areas were under more direct control of Ch'ing government. Administratively, the Ch'ing policy of "divide and rule" in Mongolia was a success (Ho 1967; Fletcher 1978, 51–52).

While East Mongolia—Inner and Outer Mongolia—were brought under Manchu control as planned, the Western Mongols, mostly of mixed Mongolian and Turkish blood and collectively known as the *Öölöds* (Kalmuks), posed a real menace to the Ch'ing court. Of all the *Öölöds* tribes, the Zunghars during the latter half of the

seventeenth century were the most powerful. Under the leadership of Galdan (d. 1697), the Zunghars dominated the vast territories north and south of the T'ien-shan range, Tsinghai (Kohonor), and Tibet. Relying in part on firearms and armorers supplied by Russia, especially on the Zhunghars' own ability to manufacture technologically advanced cannons (*Ch'un-ke-erh shih-lüeh* 1985, 128–29), and posing as a devout supporter of the yellow sect of Tibetan Buddhism, Galdan repeatedly invaded Outer and Inner Mongolia. These invasions made it necessary for emperor K'ang-hsi personally to lay down the main strategy, with meticulous logistical planning, for a series of expeditions to the far northwest, which finally resulted in the collapse of the Zungharian empire and the death of Galdan in 1697. In fact, early in the war in 1691, when K'ang-hsi went to Dolonor in eastern Inner Mongolia to receive the homage of all the high Mongol chiefs, he was not only esteemed as their overlord but also regarded as their savior. This recognition established the unshaken prestige of Manchu rulers over the Mongols for the remainder of the dynasty.

However, the continued intrigues and instability in Tibet and the ambitions of other Öölöd leaders after Galdan's death made it necessary for emperors Yung-cheng and Ch'ien-lung to dispatch further expeditions, which resulted in the Ch'ing conquest of the entire area of Chinese Turkestan and Tsinghai and the establishment of the Manchu protectorate of Tibet. All these conquests were accomplished before the end of the eighteenth century. The main events and the variegated administrative systems devised for this extremely complicated ethnic area are told elsewhere;⁶ this essay must limit its task to a brief assessment of the effects of this remarkable Ch'ing empire-building on China as a whole.

Our task is greatly facilitated by the macrohistorical perspective of the late Joseph Fletcher:

Before 1800 the focus of Ch'ing history was on Inner Asia—its conquest, its politics, the swallowing and digesting of immense, culturally diverse areas by a single increasingly Han Chinese empire. After 1800 the emphasis began to shift to the interior of China proper and to the coast. In the nineteenth century Ch'ing Inner Asia commenced being slowly absorbed into an expanding China and began to come under the influence of Han Chinese culture.

(Fletcher 1978, 35)

The combined effects of Russia's eastward expansion from Turkestan to the Amur region near the Pacific Ocean, the Anglo-Chinese war over opium, and a series of internal disturbances and rebellions from 1796 onwards, which culminated in the outbreak in 1851 of the Taiping rebellion, the most massive civil war in human history, are too well known to need any elaboration. It is clear, therefore, that the Manchu court needed not only the collective talent and dedication of the Chinese elite but also the sheer resilience and numbers of the Chinese population, which reached 300 million by 1800 and 430 million by 1850, to come to its rescue.

We should not omit mentioning that even during the repeated Zungharian expeditions of the K'ang-hsi era there were already signs of decreasing efficacy of the

⁶Joseph Fletcher (1978) remains the best survey based on Chinese and Western sources. The best concise analysis of the complex Ch'ing Inner Asian policies and administrative systems is Wang 1993. The literature on Tibet is considerable and controversial, but Petech 1973 is generally regarded as the most scholarly, objective, and fair. His conclusion that the organization of the Ch'ing protectorate of Tibet took its final form in 1751 and that this protectorate was maintained until after the fall of the Ch'ing Dynasty in 1912, has been accepted by most specialists of China's national minorities.

Eight-Banner army and the increasing usefulness of the Chinese Green Standard forces. Soon after the pacification of entire Turkestan, the Ch'ing court launched a policy of colonizing Zungharia, which had large tracts of territory suitable for farming. The colonization took many forms: by sinicized Muslims of Eastern Turkestan, by the Chinese Green Standard soldiers and families, by the Eight-Banner units and households, by Chinese convicts and exiles, and by Chinese civilian colonists from China proper attracted by the government offer of 4 1/2 acres (30 *mu*) of land per household. By 1800 the number of these Chinese civilian colonists in the area around Urumchi alone is said to have increased many times from the 72,000 persons registered in 1775 (Fletcher 1978, 65–66). Around the old and newly built walled cities of Zungharia and in the oasis-cities around the fringe of the Tarim Basin south of the T'ien-shan range, Chinese and Tungan (Chinese Muslims of Kansu and Shensi) traders played an increasingly important role in the local and regional commerce (Fletcher 1978, 106). But these measures were inadequate to stabilize this vast area of unusual ethnic and religious complexity and to offset the omnipresent menace from Russia.

It was in Mongolia that the Manchu policy and the tacit Manchu-Chinese understanding procured results beyond their fondest dreams. It has been pointed out earlier that the administrative apparatus K'ang-hsi and his successors set up for Inner and Outer Mongolia worked very well. But it was the Ch'ing religious policy of sponsoring the Yellow sect of the Tibetan Buddhism in Mongolia that permanently enervated the descendants of the most fearsome military conquerors in human history (Wang 1990, 170–75). Fletcher further remarks:

In the nineteenth century, the dynasty had the Mongols under control, and the Ch'ing government feared them no more. Even the population was evidently in decline, among the main reasons being monasticism and syphilis. . . . Unceasingly, Ch'ing interests in Mongolia became Han Chinese interests. . . . If anything, Han Chinese economic penetration served the dynasty's interest, because it bound the Mongols tightly to the rest of the empire.

(Fletcher 1978, 332–33)

Mongolia was to further suffer from the following economic chain reaction. The heavy debt incurred by Mongol aristocracy and lamaseries compelled them to mortgage illegally large tracts of pasture land to Chinese merchants. The Chinese merchants brought in more and more Chinese peasants to convert the grazing land into more productive farmland. Under the double pressure of increased fiscal burden and ever-dwindling pastureland, the Mongol commoners were uprooted from their traditional nomadic mode of life and became pauperized. Although Ch'ing statutes prohibited the alienation of pastureland in Mongolia, the declining Ch'ing government could not but recognize the accomplished fact—Mongolia, especially Inner Mongolia, became increasingly “sinicized.”

Emperor K'ang-hsi's only short-sighted policy was the one towards his ancestral land of Manchuria. In 1688 he decided to close off Manchuria entirely and make it exclusively a reservoir for the Manchus. In spite of frequent violations of this prohibition by Chinese immigrants from northern provinces of Shantung, Chihli (Hopei), and Honan, especially in years of famine, the aggregate Chinese immigration into Manchuria up to the middle of the nineteenth century was limited and northeastern Manchuria remained a power vacuum area. Not until after Czarist Russia forced the Ch'ing court to cede some 350,000 square miles of territories north of the Amur and east of the Ussuri in 1860 did the Chinese colonization of Manchuria

become a matter of urgent national concern. All legal bans to Chinese colonization had been removed before Manchuria was made into three provinces in 1907, when its total population was around 17 million. Subsequent sustained Chinese immigration doubled the population to 34 million in 1930, a year before Japan launched her Manchurian conquest. In the heyday of imperialism, the only way for the late Ch'ing and early Republican China to save Manchuria was to resort to what we may call the most elemental means of sinicization, i.e., to populate it with millions of Chinese (Ho 1959, 158–63).

The outbreak of the Taiping Rebellion in 1851 not only fully revealed the degeneration of the Eight-Banner army system but also forced the Ch'ing court to depend on the collective talent and loyalty of Chinese officials and gentry for survival. It was precisely at this critical juncture that the Manchu court, which had carried out a policy of systematic sinicization for two centuries, reaped its greatest reward. To answer the pseudo-Leveler-Christian creed of the Taiping rebels, which was fundamentally subversive of traditional Chinese values, Tseng Kuo-fan (1811–72), a Ch'eng-Chu devotee with inclinations towards the statecraft school of Ch'ing thinkers, solemnly declared in 1852, virtually on behalf of the whole Chinese ruling elite, its political, cultural, and ideological identity with the Manchu dynasty. The Hunan army corps, which Tseng experimentally organized, trained, and led from 1852 onwards, proved to be the only potent military unit in fighting the Taiping rebels. The main strength of the “Hunan Braves” lay in the strong personal bonds between the commander, officers, and native-son soldiers. Inspired by the efficacy of Tseng's corps, “brave battalions” were soon organized in other Yangtze provinces. As it turned out, the brave battalions marked the beginning of a process in which the main army system was “sinicized” in the sense of its being completely dominated by the Chinese and of becoming gradually modernized.

Although Chinese statesmen and generals gave the Manchu dynasty a new lease on life, the internal and external problems of the post-Taiping period were still legion. For our purpose, no problem could be more serious than the great Hui (Chinese Muslim) rebellion in the northwest between 1862 and 1877, which had international implications. In sharp contrast to the Arab, Persian, and other Central Asian Muslim elite who spontaneously chose to adopt the Chinese culture and value system during a century of Mongol rule, Ch'ing Chinese Muslims of Shensi, Kansu, and Turkestan lived in mosque-centered communities, observed their religious taboos, and segregated themselves from the Chinese. And, although Sufi mysticism had trickled into China since the fifteenth century, it began to produce great impact on Chinese Islam only from mid-Ch'ing onwards, especially in the northwest. Moreover, in the course of time those Chinese Muslim teachers (*akunds*) who established certain Sufi orders virtually became founders of local or regional religious dynasties, enjoying almost absolute authority on doctrinal and administrative matters, owning large estates, and receiving “tithes” (not necessarily one-tenth) and other forms of contribution from faithful followers. The office and privileges were hereditary within the “saintly leader's” family. By the latter half of the eighteenth century such houses came to be called by the Chinese as *men-huan*, literally, “houses of officials,” which actually meant “houses of Muslim magnates.”⁷

⁷Gladney 1996, 41–48. Articles on “*men-huan*,” “*i-ch'an*,” and a series of biographical sketches in *Zhongguo dabaikewanshu* (The Chinese Encyclopedia). Volumes on *Minzu* (Nationalities) and *Zongjiao* (Religions) are helpful. “*Men-huan*” as a special term did not come into being until the latter half of the eighteenth century. The term first appeared in Ch'ing doc-

The two most famous *men-buan* were both in the Kansu-Tsinghai border area. The earlier one was founded by Ma Lai-ch'ih (1681–1766) and the later one was founded by Ma Ming-hsin. Both Mas had completed years of study abroad, in Mecca and other Islamic centers. The former could count on as many as over 200,000 followers at the height of his power. The latter, an akund of fundamentalist and reformist inclinations, soon after his return to China in 1741, founded a “new” school, preaching simpler and purer worship including criticism of the hereditary vested interests in general. From 1761 onwards his followers began to make rapid headway into Ma Lai-ch'ih's sphere of influence. A series of clashes culminated in serious bloodshed in 1781, which called for government armed intervention and the execution of Ma Ming-shin and the main troublemakers among his disciples. This tragic episode made Ma Ming-hsin a martyr-saint, whose posthumous influence spread far and wide, such that the pivotal figure in the great Hui rebellion of the 1860s in Shensi and Kansu was his fifth-generation descendant Ma Hua-lung (1810–71). The prolonged Han-Muslim community feuds, the discriminating laws against the Muslims from 1762 onwards, the inherent Muslim resentment of the infidels and suppressed secessionist urge, and the brief Taiping thrust into the heart of Shensi in 1862 all contributed to the outbreak of the great Muslim rebellion in Shensi, Kansu, and Sinkiang.

The task of salvaging the northwest, especially Sinkiang, the most vulnerable and by now the most critical portion of the Ch'ing Inner Asian empire, once more fell to Chinese statesmen, generals, and soldiers, specifically Tso Tsung-t'ang (1812–85) and his Hunan brave battalions. The protracted nature of the war in Shensi and Kansu mainly resulted from the need of the Ch'ing army to capture hundreds upon hundreds of Muslim stockades and fortified villages. Not until late 1873 were these two provinces cleared of Muslim rebels. But the situation in Sinkiang remained very grave. Southern Sinkiang, the Muslim Uighur area, had been dominated by the intruder Yakub Beg, a former general of the Khokand army who had extensive contacts with Islamic states; Russia, fishing in troubled waters, had already militarily occupied the Ili valley since 1871. Tso's campaign had to wait for more than a year because Japan's brief invasion of Taiwan in the spring of 1874 evoked a great debate between advocates of maritime defense and those who placed highest priority on the recovery of Sinkiang. Tso finally prevailed and embarked on his expedition in early 1875. Thanks to his indomitable will and meticulous planning, to the two huge foreign loans totaling 51 million taels, and to the procuring of a sufficient number of Krupp siege guns, his army fulfilled its mission in less than two years—a feat most Western powers including Russia had deemed impossible. Only Ili was to be settled diplomatically in 1881 (Liu 1980; Hsu 1980). It may indeed be said that it was Tso's ethnic Chinese army that saved the consolidated multiethnic empire so laboriously built up by the successive Manchu emperors K'ang-hsi, Yung-cheng, and Ch'ien-lung.

Sinkiang, always an administrative labyrinth because of its exceptional ethnoreligious complexity, was finally made a province in 1884—a measure that may be regarded as administrative sinicization. It is true, that, in spite of the drastic rationalization of the multifarious administrative apparatuses, the concentration of control under the newly created office of the governor, and steadier and larger-scale

uments in the spring of 1897. “*Men-buan*” as a term has therefore been used by current writers on Chinese Muslims retrogressively to much earlier periods. Perhaps out of courtesy, Western writers on Chinese Muslims avoid mentioning that the *men-buan* were hereditary vested interest groups of rather reactionary kind. “*Men-buan*” as a system seems to have been wiped out by waves of social and economic reforms under the People's Republic.

Chinese immigration, this vast province was far from sinicized. Yet, the very fact that Sinkiang was administratively “interiorized,” i.e., organized along the line of the provinces of China proper, was bound to have its psychological and international jurisdictional effect. For similar but more urgent reasons, Manchuria was made into three provinces in 1907. The process of “interiorization” of other parts of the Ch’ing Inner Asian empire was disrupted by the downfall of the dynasty in 1911–12. But as soon as the era of warlordism was brought to an end, the Nationalist government in 1928 resumed the old process of administrative sinicization by making Kham, eastern Tibet, the new province of Sikiang (Hsi-k’ang); by making Tsinghai a full-fledged province; and by transforming Inner Mongolia into three provinces, namely, Jehol, Chahar, and Suiyüan. Owing to internal weakness and external threats from Russia, Britain, and Japan, Late Ch’ing and Republican China could not do much to save her vital ethnic areas beyond carrying out schemes of administrative sinicization—largely a calculated gesture that could not be backed up by political and military strength. For a full century after the Opium War, China learned endless lessons from Western imperialist powers and Japan that sovereignty over any part of her outlying areas required proof of effective jurisdiction, which in the last analysis boiled down to ability to defend it with military force. It seems a great irony that in the 1950s, when China finally proved its ability to assert authority over its Inner Asian territories and thus overturned foreign assessments of China’s political impotence during the previous century, some of these foreign countries began to criticize Chinese strength leading to interference in the affairs of its national minorities. The making of Inner Mongolia, Ninghsia, Sinkiang, Tibet, and Kuangsi into five autonomous regions in the 1950s, which in theory reversed the process of administrative sinicization of major ethnic areas during the previous six decades of national weakness and humiliation, signified the ability and determination of the People’s Republic of China to fully defend her territorial integrity.

Discussion of the phases and facets of Manchu sinicization along with the growth and decline of the Ch’ing Inner Asian empire makes it abundantly clear that sinicization and empire-building were complementary rather than competitive forces. Indeed it was unprecedented prosperity and population growth—largely the outcome of early Ch’ing policy of systematic sinicization including the carrying out of a series of equitable fiscal reforms—that provided three generations of able Manchu rulers with the necessary resources to construct and sustain the largest consolidated polyethnic empire in Chinese history. When the Ch’ing Inner Asian empire began to decline after 1800 and the dynasty’s collapse seemed impending in the 1850s, it took the collective talent and dedication of the entire Han Chinese ruling elite and every conceivable form of sinicization, including massive Chinese immigration into ethnic areas, to save the polyethnic empire and the dynastic house from crumbling.

As national crises deepened in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Manchus and the Han Chinese shared more and more a larger sense of identity—being all “Chinese” in the same boat struggling to navigate through the rough waters of intensified imperialism. Not until the Empress Dowager Tz’u-hsi-dominated Manchu court had clearly and repeatedly demonstrated its utter inability to overcome inertia and to “self-strengthen,” especially after China’s defeat by Japan in 1895 and further humiliation consequent upon the Boxer uprising in 1900, did some Chinese intellectuals begin to launch a revolution aimed at the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty. Speaking of the Ch’ing period as a whole, there was never a polarity between polyethnic-empire-building and systematic sinicization. The dichotomy set up by Rawski is doubly false because of her ignorance or reluctance to search more deeply

into the close correlationship between these two mainstays of the whole policy structure and because of her distortion of my multidimensional theme, which clearly shows their complementarity.

Toward the end of her address, Rawski makes another generalization:

“Sinicization”—the thesis that all of the non-Han peoples who have entered the Chinese realm have eventually been assimilated into Chinese culture—is a twentieth-century Han Nationalist interpretation of China’s past.

(Rawski 1996, 842)

Historiographically, her statement needs serious qualification. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the words “sinicize” and “sinicization” first appeared in the *Athenaeum* respectively on 18 September 1889 and 26 November 1895, both in reference to Japanese language, religion and civilization. In fact, the view of the inevitable sinicization of China’s nomad conquerors seems to have been expounded again and again by such sinological and philological luminaries as Sir Henry Yule (1820–89), Edouard Chavannes (1860–1916), Sir Aurel Stein (1862–1943), and especially Paul Pelliot (1878–1945) (Wittfogel and Feng 1949, 4). I suspect that it was under Pelliot’s inspiration that Ch’en Yüan, president of the leading Catholic Fuzhou University, who was in close touch with French sinology with the help of research assistants, published his famous study of the sinicization of Western and Central Asians during Mongol times in 1935.

Looking back, very few scholars and students of the 1930s even heard of Ch’en’s book, because practically all of us were constantly haunted by the presence of the spearhead of the Japanese Kwantung Army merely 200 kilometers from Peiping. It was not the time to find solace in the irresistible power of the traditional culture of China to civilize her steppe conquerors. It was the time for hundreds of us on the Tsing Hua campus to ponder over Professor Lei Hai-tsung’s (1902–62) highly self-critical macrohistorical perspective as to how and why the Chinese civilization during the imperial age should be regarded as a “soldierless civilization,” which accounted for repeated partial and total conquests by peoples of the great Eurasian steppe.⁸

Sixty years later, it is with full understanding of the basic weakness of traditional Chinese civilization that I attempt to make the following concluding remarks on sinicization.

1. Although the way in which great European sinologists and philologists generalized about the inevitability of the sinicization of China’s alien conquerors may appear a bit simplistic today, there can be no gainsaying their general assessment of the basic strength of Chinese civilization, in terms of level of achievement and richness of content, vis-à-vis others in the Eastern and Northeastern Asian world in historic times. Cumulative international research on China during the past century seems to have, by and large, affirmed rather than refuted their assessment. A fair and objective reassessment is found in the general editors’ preface to *The Cambridge History of China* (1978):

⁸A series of Lei Hai-tsung’s macrohistorical essays were published in the 1930s in *The Tsing Hua Journal* and Tsing Hua University’s *Social Sciences* (both in Chinese). “A Soldierless Civilization” is reprinted in Lei’s *Chung-kuo-wen-huayu chung-kuo ti ping*. It ought to be pointed out that China always seems to have borne the main brunt of the onslaughts of the largest and most ferocious nomad conglomerates of the Eurasian steppe. The barbarian groups that invaded the Roman Empire during the fifth century A.D. were numerically far smaller, usually consisting of some 20,000 or 25,000 fighting men. For a methodical discussion, see A. H. M. Jones 1986, 194–99.

The history of Chinese civilization is more extensive and complex than that of any single Western nation, and only slightly less ramified than the European civilization as a whole.

The old sinologists' view sounds trite, but truths and near-truths often sound trite.

2. The innate strength of sinicization seems to have been ultimately derived from the man-centered Sinitic religion with ancestor worship as its core. The ancient Sinitic religion, with the extension of the concern for biological and social perpetuation from "self" to "others," is fundamentally different from ancient Western religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—which are characterized by their exclusivity and sectarianism. China was fortunate in not having any "holy war" in her long history until the Muslim rebellion of the third quarter of the nineteenth century. In long-range interethnic and interfaith contacts, the open-mindedness and large-heartedness of the Chinese could not fail to create a favorable impression upon the thinking aliens. The "largeness" in the traditional Chinese "psyche" may well have been the main reason why sinicization normally was not forced but spontaneous.⁹ Otherwise, it is difficult to imagine how the 1990 census would have shown only 3 percent of China's population to be minorities living in strategic Inner Asian areas; Rawski's preoccupation with such groups in the Ch'ing dynasty leads her thesis to a dead-end.¹⁰

3. Part of the power and persuasiveness of sinicization has rested in its open and dynamic appropriation of religio-philosophical ideas and aspects of material culture

⁹The late Professor Lo Hsiang-lin of the University of Hong Kong has left us two exceptionally well-documented case-studies of long-range sinicization of two Arab families (clans). The P'u family can be traced 900 years back to the 1050s in the northern Sung period. The best known member was P'u Shou-keng of Ch'uan-chou (Zayton), Fukien. While serving as director of maritime trade at the end of the Southern Sung period, he surrendered to the Mongols along with the sailing ships under his command. Consequently, his clan greatly flourished under the Mongols and produced some famous officials and poets. The P'u clan, including its offshoots in Canton, managed to do well in Ming-Ch'ing times. Based on editions of the P'u genealogy, epitaphs, ramified literary works, and even calls on living P'u descendants, Lo's *P'u Shou-heng yen-chiu* has superseded all previous Japanese studies. Lo's book has a special appendix devoted to the Sa clan of Foochow, which is traced back to the time of Khubilai Khan in the thirteenth century. This clan of Arab origin has "perpetuated" its success so well that it can boast of an admiral, Sa Chen-ping (1859–1951) and two professors at National Tsing Hua University in the 1930s, namely, Sa Pen-t'ieh, professor of organic chemistry, and his younger and better known brother, Sa Pen-tung, professor of physics and electrical engineering, who later became president of Hsia-men (Amoy) University. These case studies testify eloquently to the ability of Arabs to adopt Chinese culture and to adapt to the typically Chinese milieu.

Different in nature but no less instructive is Henry Serruy's *The Mongols in Kansu during the Ming*, which actually brings the subject to the early twentieth century. It shows that the Ming government never resorted to forced assimilation of this sizable group of Mongols stranded in the northwest and relied in the long run on natural forces to do the work of sinicization.

¹⁰For population figures of China's national minorities shown by the Peoples Republic of China's four censuses, see Mackerras 1994, 237–59, especially Table 9.1. It is generally known that, with the exception of small enclaves in Sinkiang and Heilongjiang, most of the 9.8 million "Manchus" registered in 1990 have been completely integrated with the Han Chinese. Only some 600,000 of the 8.6 million Hui (Muslims) in the 1990 census live in Sinkiang. Moreover, there is good reason to believe that modernization will promote the integration of minority "nationalities" with the Han Chinese (Mackerras 1994, 1995). Small wonder, then, that Rawski has to be purposely vague in the temporal sense by saying that her ethnic-oriented thesis is "concentrated on earlier moments of the [Ch'ing] period" (Rawski 1996, abstract).

from abroad. The single most outstanding case was the “Indianization” of early medieval China by Buddhism and the eventual sinicization of Buddhism from T’ang times onwards. Sinicized Buddhist metaphysics constituted an important part of the Sung Neo-Confucian synthesis. Sinicization in its larger and legitimate sense far transcends the narrow confines of interethnic relations and embraces the evolution of the whole Chinese civilization.

4. Sinicization is a continual and unending process and any diachronic study of sinicization must end with a conjecture about its future. During the past 200 years the sphere in which the forces of sinicization used to operate has been enlarged from Eastern and Northeastern Asia to the whole globe; and globally Chinese civilization has encountered the modern Western civilization, which is more powerful because of its scientific and technological revolution. Consequently, in the intercivilizational exchange China’s role has been changed from that of a “giver” to that of a “receiver.” Despite a century of tardy and limited attempts at modernization, China’s all-out efforts and determination since 1978 have already produced so large an impact on the world economy as to lead to some predictions that in the coming decades the Chinese economy may become the world’s largest. No one can accurately predict what China will look like by the year 2025. What is certain is that China will have its own distinct characteristics. Between now and then, Chinese tradition will have to be adjusted to the changing times; and Western science-technology, economic, social, political theories and ideologies, voluntarily and involuntarily introduced, will have to undergo the process of sinicization in the sense of their being tested, sifted, digested, and absorbed in such a way as to be reasonably well-adapted to China’s changing needs.

Sinicization has, therefore, its perennial significance.

It is well to remember that “Han-hua,” the term in Chinese for sinicization, is not entirely correct; the truly correct Chinese term should be “Hua-hua” because the forces of sinicization had begun to operate millennia before the Han dynasty came into being.

Rawski might more usefully have begun the work of tracing into the present sinicization’s evolutionary role in Chinese history—sinicization’s new relevance to

Westernization and modernization now that contemporary China is engaged in redefining its cultural relations with the West—instead of settling far too easily and comfortably into the currently fashionable school of “cultural critics” who mechanically substitute ideology for scholarship and historical vision.

Glossary

An-shih-na Ho-lu 阿史那
賀魯
Ch’eng-ch’ien 承乾
chi-chueh-shih 繼絕世
Ch’ieh-yun 切韻
Chin Mi-ti 金日磾
Chung-chou chi 中州集
Ho Ch’ou 何稠
Hsi (of Manchuria) 奚
Hsi (of inland Yangtze) 侯
Hsieh-li 頡利
hsing-mieh-kuo 興滅國
i-ch’an 依禪
Li Ch’eng-liang 李成梁
Li Kuang-pi 李光弼
Li Po 李白

Liu Yu-hsi 劉禹錫
Lu Fa-yen 陸法言
Ma Hua-lung 馬化龍
Ma Lai-ch’ih 馬來遲
Ma Ming-hsin 馬明心
Men-huan 門宦
Meng-an-mo-k’e 猛安謀克
Mi Fu 米芾
Ou-yang Hsun 歐陽詢
Po Chu-i 白居易
rou-jan 柔然
Sa Cheng-ping 薩鎮冰
Sa Pen-t’ieh 薩本鐵
Sa Pen-tung 薩本棟
Se-mu 色目
Sha-t’o 沙陀

T’ao Ch’ien (Yuan-ming)
陶潛(淵明)
T’ao K’an 陶侃
T’ieh-le 鐵勒
Ts’an-t’ien-k’e-han-tao
參天可汗道
Tseng Kuo-fan 曾國藩
Tso Tsung-t’ang 左宗棠
tsung-fa 宗法
T’u-li 突利
Wu-huan 烏桓
Yu Cheng-hsieh 俞正燮
Yuan Chen 元稹
Yuan Hao-wen 元好問
Yu-wen K’ai 宇文愷

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